

12612 df
10

LOVE

IN

N

HIGH LIFE;

OR THE

AMOURS of a COURT.

*LOVE reigns despotic in the mind of Man,
Whose noblest passions are its common sport;
Extends its empire to a boundless Plan;
Nor spurns the Cottage, nor reveres the Court.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. KNOWLES, next the Chapter-House
in St. Paul's Church-Yard.



INTRODUCTION.

LOVE, gallantry, and their gay attendants, have, in all polished nations, made so considerable a figure in the fashionable way of each people's method of living, that without a knowledge thereof, no faithful picture of their manners can be transmitted to posterity.

Some memoirs have accidentally fallen into our hands, that were originally collected by a Petronian genius, who had taken uncommon pains to make himself a thorough master of the rise, progress, and vicissitudes of gallantry from the

days of Alexander the Great,
down to the present times.

Although such a subject to a short-sighted reader may promise nothing but scenes of wantonness, yet to all, capable of taking a comprehensive view of the following work, they must allow it to be a most instructive compilation for the youth of both sexes.

True love has but seldom appeared in the world. We mean that refined passion in which a sentimental attachment prevails over gross desire, justly stigmatized by the name of lust; by whose impetuosity most men are hurried away in the first heat of youth, but
which

which subsides as we advance in years.

Lust may be called an unbridled ferocity of affection, that disdains all restraint, and degrades its harbourers into a state of brutality; whereas time, that is, sentimental love, is the parent of that polite attention and delicate behaviour with which we treat the dear object of our desires.

The characteristic of gallantry is, that without being strongly affected, it inspires flattering, and at the same delicate expressions to those into whose good graces we would fain insinuate ourselves; all gross daubing she detests, and assigns over

to her awkward apes. For without a strict observance of decency and gentleness, all intercourse between the two sexes loses greatly of its value.

Among the politely educated, a kind glance, a nod of the head, or any little mark of preference from the object beloved, are deemed inestimable favours.

What a delicious state is that of the truly enamoured, still lured on by the rays of hope, their fledged desires being ever on the wing, from flight to flight, they at last soar up to the pinnacle of human bliss.

Respect often constrains love, but it can never extinguish it,
 nay,

may, on the contrary, gives an intenser glow. This passion, may not improperly be compared with spirituous liquors, which the more hermetically they are stopt in order to prevent their exhaling, the greater force they acquire.

The symptoms by which all persons can readily determine whether they be in love or not, are, their being in great anxiety when absent from the object they admire; and, on seeing it, their feeling emotions they can not command.

By an amorous disposition we understand that prompt alacrity to be smitten with every pleasing object; and those endowed

dowed therewith are called general lovers.

Those capable of a violent passion for a particular person, excluded of all the sex besides, are fitted out by nature (that abhors all feint and adventitious colours,) to figure in solemn and tragic catastrophes.

But they whose affections are more universal, being less tied to one particular object, have a studied eye of complaisance to more: by affected passions, and a prodigality of flattering the foibles of women they generally succeed, and are celebrated as the promoters of gallantry, whose first brilliant æra in ancient history is to be fixed

fixed among the Egyptians; because, according to all history, the polite arts made their first appearance among them. The polite arts being the polishers of human society, are consequently the parents of gallantry; because in such societies it only can exist.

The ancient Greeks derived from the same fountain, from which they had drawn their knowledge of the arts and sciences, the doctrine of love, which breathes warmly through most of their poets works.

The Romans having conquered the Greeks by force of arms, they were afterwards conquered in their turn by the superiority

periority of the Greeks in all the arts and sciences, which they were glad to receive from Greece, and with them they imported gallantry into Rome, where it throve apace. Its principal votaries and promoters were, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, Horace, Ovid, Petronius, &c. The passion of gallantry was by degrees diffused through all the Roman provinces.

When the polite arts and Rome were overturned by barbarous invasions from the North, gallantry underwent the same eclipse that genius did, and reappeared not 'till the revival of literature. Then as the poets,
under

under Pope Leo's reign, began to trim the long withered bay so the shepherds began to pipe their loves in the sweet vales of Italy; nor did the nymphs prove averse to listen thereto.

From Italy literature and gallantry spread, over the Alps, into the Gallic and neighbouring regions; whence, though long afraid to hazard themselves on the sea, they at length ventured to cross over from Calais to Dover; where, as all strangers are to this day (though often without any other merit, but that of being so), they were greedily received by the inhabitants of Albion, who, by their ardent application

plication to both, seemed eager and bent upon making up for all the time which had been lost by their ancestry. For since that happy epoch, there have not been more frequent sacrifices offered up, or more devout libations poured out in honour of the Cyprian deities in any region, than by their zealous worshippers in Albion, as shall be proved in the sequel of this history.



Love in High Life.

THE celebrated Macedonian hero, Philip, was married to the beautiful Olympia, who, on the night before the consummation of her nuptials, dreamt, that one of Jupiter's thunder-bolts had been conveyed into her womb, from which a sudden and universal fire broke out, that pointed to a variety of places, by the several dazzling divisions of its flame.

Several authors relate the affair in quite another manner, asserting that as the Princess lay in bed, a serpent of an uncommon size, and beautifully variegated with dazzling specks, was wont to be seen moving about her chamber, in a very fond and

B

passionate

passionate strain, and sometimes lying stretched by her snowy side.

So extraordinary an event gave rise to her being beloved and enjoyed by some deity, under the disguise of a serpent, which surmise had such an amazing effect upon her husband, king Philip, that he never approached her afterwards in order to fulfill conjugal duty; but he was struck with a reverential awe, and to such a degree, that whenever she was obliging enough to grant him a favour, he humbly hoped the freedom he was taking would not be disagreeable to the love from above.

From these incidents it was that the mercenary interpreters of the sacred oracles, subtle soothsayers, and court-sycophants, resolved in themselves, that

that if the unborn babe queen Olympias was pregnant of, should prove a prince, and live to man's estate, they would feed his vanity, by asserting him to be not of mere mortal origin, but the son of one of the immortal gods ; nay, of mighty Jove ! who, born by a flame of love, had insinuated himself into his mother's womb, in the form of one of his own thunderbolts !

Whereas many pert critics may hereupon observe, that to give a greater sanction to the work we have undertaken, we might have deduced the origin of gallantry from the frequent amorous excursions of the mighty thunderer, supreme Jove, who, with a nod of his all-directing bow shakes high Olympus, the humble earth, Neptune's empire, and

Pluto's dark domains ; as well as from the many wanton intrigues of his fellow gods, his celestial compeers, who, notwithstanding they feasted upon nectar and ambrosia, and had goddesses for their play-fellows to solace, them in their idle hours, yet thought there was something deficient to compleat their happiness ; and therefore made not a few digressions down to earth, in order to riot upon a smack of fresh and blooming mortality.

These few instances are quoted :—the story of Danae, the daughter of Acrisius, who in order to prevent the completion of an oracle against his life, shut up his daughter in a strong tower, that she might never know the approach of man, it having been foretold that the fruit of her womb should prove fatal to him.

But

But what barriers cannot vigorous passion surmount? what impediments are so strong that it cannot force its way through? the great alchymist Jove conveyed himself to Danae's lap in a melting shower of gold, and there was rapturously dissolved by the kind operation of her charms in Cupid's laboratory.

His divinityship clung to the beautiful Leda in the form of a swan, and on her glowing bosom with impassioned wings fluttered the eagerness of his passion.

To fair Europa, in the shape of a bull, with gentle lowings he expressed his fondness; eat with luxury the herbage she presented to him with her snowy hand; and, by way of grateful return, crouched invitingly for her

to mount upon his back ; which she did, and was immediately wafted by him through the sea to scenes of bliss unknown to her before.

All this we know as well as our objectors, and make them this short answer; that by mounting up to the fabulous history of the Pagan gods, we should entangle ourselves in multitudinous absurdities and contradictions. Besides, our scheme is to write of the amours and gallantry of those illustrious personages who have really existed, and which can be authenticated by history.

From this resolution, he who appeared to us to be the most proper choice to shine the foremost on our list, is the celebrated conqueror of Asia, so often stiled by his flatterers, the son of Ammonian Jove.

He

He succeeded to his mortal father Philip's throne, in the twentieth year of his age. We shall not enter into a minute account of the progress and many wonders of his arms, as that would be writing the history of his heroic actions ; but will confine ourselves to those incidents of his life where he paid homage to the all-subduing beauty of the fair sex.

After the glorious victory he had gained over Darius, in which an hundred and ten thousand of his enemies were slain, he took possession of the defeated monarch's tent, fraught with variety of magnificence, and riches of every kind.

The afflicted queen of Darius, and the princesses her daughters, being brought before the conqueror, he was affected by their sorrow more than by

his own success. He bid them not to despond, assuring them that Darius, whom they wept for, was still alive, and that though they were fallen into his hands, and his prisoners by right of war, yet they should not know the least abatement of their former regal state, but live in the same pomp as if in the court of Darius before his overthrow.

This pleasing declaration of Alexander filled them with rays of comfort; and the eldest of the princesses, Statira, of a remarkable majestic deportment, and whose beauty seemed to be enhanced by the sorrow she had been lately plunged in, and which she then emerged from; wiping a pearly tear just dropping from her eye, she addressed him with such dignity as might be called the triumph of affliction.

The

The elegantly pathetic turn of her phrase, and sweetly insinuating tone of her voice, which there was no resisting, so gained upon Alexander, silent in rapturous amazement at the enchanting sounds he heard, that the victor of so many armies acknowledged his sovereign in Statira, and declared himself her voluntary slave.

Every hour that he could absent himself from the weighty affairs of state he dedicated to Statira, in whose bewitching conversation he found a source of endless charms. He was not easy but in her presence, and at every visit, instead of being palled with her beauty, it grew stronger on him.

So smitten was he by love for the fair daughter of the unfortunate Darius,

rius, that all his addressees to her were couched in the most respectful terms ; nor could more homage be paid to her, or more delicacy of manners observed, if she had been wooed in her father's court.

Alexander, who conquered men by force, chose to subdue the fair sex but by gentleness, and all obliging attention to their desires. Philip's son, who like most young heroes, would rather enjoy a beauty on the terms of friendship, than be bound by matrimonial contract for obligation, flattered himself that Statira, in return for all his courteous behaviour to her, could not refuse him the favour of generously contributing to his happiness ; and for such kind consent he proposed to reinstate her father in his dominions of Persia.

But

But such a sway had this princess, whose virtue was inflexible, obtained over him, that though he waited several times on her, in order to make her the proposal; yet so awestruck was he in her presence, that his tongue refused its office. However, emboldened at last, he declared his inclination for, and intention to serve her and family, if she would kindly concur with his desires.

The princess having paused for a while, made him this unexpected answer, " Kingdoms you have conquered, and armies have fled before you. This the terror of your name, and the superior discipline of your troops might have produced. But neither of them can force Statira's mind to act beneath the dignity of her rank, and the sentiments of virtue in
which

which she has been educated, and hitherto adhered to inviolably.”

“ Should my refusal provoke, I am not ignorant that it is in your power to subdue me by violence to your desire; that is the assailable part of me, this mere mortal frame. But there is another part of Statira, the immortal particle, out of your reach, which you can never come at; and the moment that you shall attempt by brutal force to stain my body's honour, my unconsenting, and untainted soul, shall fly from its polluted habitation. What a glorious boast will it then be for the son of Philip, the inheritor of the throne of Macedon, and the conqueror of Persia, &c. to have it recorded that he ravished an unfortunate princess, whose defenceless and distressed situation should have drawn

drawn protection to her from every bosom, wherein barbarity did not prevail."

Statira, interrupted by sighs, and a shower of tears, from speaking any more, Alexander, whose truly heroic pride felt the most violent agitations during her pathetic remonstrance to him, was covered with a blush of confusion for what he had offered to her, and, unable to make any answer, from the consciousness of his guilt, looked earnestly upon the weeping princess, fetched a deep sigh, and departed from her with precipitation.

As soon as come to himself, he could not reflect with patience on the base proceeding he had been guilty of, and thus reproached himself: "Is this acting consistently with the heir
of

of Macedonian Philip, much less with the son of thunder-darting Jove, who poises in his eternal scales the destiny of mortals? — No.

“ What was I about committing? any Barbarian, the wildest Scythian, can force a helpless maid, losing all respect due to the royalty of her birth! No reparation now remaineth, (my honour, not brutal lust, dictating) but the offering my hand in wedlock to Statira; if even upon those offers her well-founded resentment will deign to grant my pardon. The savage beasts of the forest may plead their rights by compulsory force; but man, the child of reason, is to submit all his actions to her unbiaſſed tribunal.”

Alexander immediately dispatched one of his favourites to the princess,
to

to assure her of his honourable intentions ; which she listened to, after some becoming scruples of delicacy, and some remonstrances, as to the disparity of their present situations. Alexander being the hereditary monarch of Macedon, and recent conqueror of Persia, she looked upon as a strong bar to his descending to match with a poor, reduced, dependent princess ; daughter of a dethroned, expelled, and impoverished monarch : whose family owed their precarious existence, and indulged privilege of breathing the air of day, to the conqueror's bounty.

The expecting lover, upon a faithful repetition being made to him of Statira's objections, was but the more enkindled to possess ; and swore by all the thunders of his father, that a princess of such nice sentiments was above
all

all meer mortal men could lay claim to, and that could he conquer a hundred worlds he should with pleasure sacrifice them to her charms ; or, if he possibly could be raised to the throne of Olympus in his reputed fire's room, Juno should recede, and give up her place to the superior merits of Statira.

After some little preambuling work, the marriage was concluded on ; and never had Hymen's torches, at any prior solemnization of nuptials emitted so pure a blaze : whose lustre officious Cupids took care to continue with the fanning of their silver wings.

For the more splendid celebration of the marriage pomp, a procession of both nations, to meet in a central point, was ordered ; and the ways
through

through which they marched were ornamented with the richest embroidered silk hangings, carpets, &c.

In compliment to the all accomplished bride, her paramour issued a mandate, that all the Persian officers taken in battle by his victorious troops, should have their arms returned to them, in order that they might attend and grace the nuptials of the princess Statira, the favourite daughter of their late vanquished lord.

After the officers, walked the different classes of the Persian priests, dressed in the richest habiliments their consecrated profession would allow of, singing, as they went, songs of thanksgiving to their patron deity; and adapted to the (for them) fortunate occasion, by which the plundering of their temples was prevented.

To

To the priests succeeded a train of virgins, daughters of the first families of Persia, in white robes, emblematic of their maiden chastity, and strewing the ground with flowers. They were led on by Parisatis, younger daughter of Darius; and as they solemnly advanced, sang hymns to the deities who preside over wedlock, imploring them that the union of Statira with Alexander might prove auspicious to both empires.

After them advanced, with majestic gracefulness, the royal bride Statira, dressed in as gorgeous a manner as human invention could execute, under a rich canopy emblazoned with diamonds, and all manner of precious stones, wrought into a pleasing variety of forms.

The

The high priest of the sun moved on the right hand of the princess; and her mother Syfigambis on the left. The Persian satraps, in most superb attire, formed the rear.

On the other part the Grecian warriors marched, clad in armour, as if going to engage; and having, at certain intervals, carried between their ranks the trophies of the several victories they had obtained.

After them moved Alexander, affecting godship, and imitating the nod of Jupiter; Clytus on the right, Hephestion on the left. Over his head, by way of canopy, was carried a large burnished serpent, intimating his strong desire of being thought more than the son of Philip. The Macedonian phalanx closed the rear.

As

As soon as Alexander's retinue had joined Statira's train, they threw down their pikes, and all offensive instruments of war, to signify that the conquerors of men are conquered by the still superior force of beauty.

While Syfigambis acted suitable to her character of queen-mother, at her daughter's wedding, Clytus personated that of Alexander's father. The marriage ceremony was performed by the high-priest of the sun.

The inferior priests sang hymns of thanksgiving to the guardian deities of Persia. The remainder of the day was spent in joy and revelry, by the chief officers of both nations, who mixed and consorted together in a very amicable manner; those of the victorious side letting escape no haughty

haughty airs to the defeated, through the uncertain fortune of war; and those, on the subdued side behaved with a decent but manly respect to their conquerors.

Alexander chid the lazy hours that did not hurry on night, which he often called tardi-gaited, that he might luxuriate on the world of charms prepared for his enjoyment. But at last, wished-for night being come, Statira was placed in a bed of the most delicate as well as sumptuous workmanship.

All around it were fixed Cupids of Persian marble, stretching to each other with flowery wreaths. Venus in the arms of Mars was painted over the bed, to intimate to the Asiatic princess, that if her beauty was equal to
that

that of the Cyprian goddess, she was that night to yield herself a conquest to no less than the other god of war, and who, like him, pretended to descend from Jupiter.

As Statira unveiled her limbs, enchanting to behold, the little marble Cupids seemed as if animated by the sight, and the flowery wreaths revived from their languid situation into the most vivid colours, breathing all around her delicious form the most exquisite perfumes. The pictured Venus, struck as it were with jealousy at the display of such superior charms, her face was suddenly crimsoned over with an animating blush, which provoked enraptured Mars to clasp her in his arms with more luscious eagerness.

Time

Time was too precious for Alexander to loiter any of it away ; and therefore, on information of Statira's being in bed, he hurried to her arms.. We leave it to the readers to figure to themselves the rapturous intoxication of these two royal personages, so supremely happy, clasped in the mutual folds of love.

In the interval of their amorous excesses, in order to recruit nature with new spirits, he gave to Statira, and drank himself from goblets crowned with flowers, which had been placed on a beaufet near the blissful bed, some of the choicest wine of Cyprus, properly prepared by those skilled in the provocative art.

His pleasure then was to throw off the cloaths, to view the various excellence

cellence of such heavenly workmanship, as was to be admired in Statira's transcendent form; or to look up, with an air of superiority and contempt, to the picture of Mars and Venus, seeming to say, confess Statira to be the more beautiful goddess, and that I Alexander am the greater god of war.

While he thus exulted, Statira's heart silently swam in an ocean of joy; and her nicely-rounded snowy breasts, two swelling worlds of love, denoted the inward transport she felt at Alexander's, the greatest of hero's, fondness.

On beholding the alternate motion of love's hemispheres, that seemed to chide their adored hero's delay, and bounded thus invitingly to provoke his genial pressure of them, young Ammon kindled, and sprang thereon with the same lightening-swiftness, as

on

on Bucephalus when a boy, and rode out triumphantly the succeeding tempest of love ; after which let us leave them to repose till morning.

Songs of triumph, and reiterated acclamations of joy, by the Persians and Greeks, which reached the very concave of heaven, and might have alarmed the inhabitants of high Olympus to hail their uprising.

Some days having been consecrated to joy and revelling, to celebrate the nuptials, Alexander set out with his court, and the chieftains of Greece and Persia, to the temple of Jupiter Ammon ; there to thank his heavenly fire for the hitherto fortunate events of war he had been favoured with : and at the same time to preserve his queen Statira to him, for whom he meant

C

to

to solicit a precedency in heaven above most other goddesses.

The grand priest of Jupiter Ammon's temple having received a private intimation, how extravagantly desirous Alexander was to be thought the son of Jupiter, knew his trade too well not to profit of the said information, and turn it to his account, by complimenting the young Macedonian monarch, agreeable to that preconceived notion.

As soon as Alexander was come within sight of the temple, he ordered the armies to form a circle around him and his beauteous queen, to whom he incessantly turned his fond eyes. "Greeks, Persians, and ye of all the nations who have the happiness to compose part of my retinue this day, that I am going to pay homage, and
present

present Statira to Jupiter my father, be careful that ye behave with that respect and devotion, which so solemn an occasion demand ; for by my great fire I swear, whoever may prove so far abandoned as to act otherwise, shall, without any respite, (were even our beloved, nay, adored Statira to solicit in their behalf) be hurled to Acheron's gloomy regions, there in tortures to howl and bemoan their folly."

As soon as Alexander had approached near to the temple gate, the great priest, attended by his inferior clergy, advanced some little way to meet ; and thus artfully accosted him. " Hail ! mirrour of princes, conqueror of the east, by mortals called Philip's heir, but who in reality are the son of Jove, that in the form of a serpent engendered thee in the chosen womb of

fair Olympias, and therein stamped the image of himself, the future sovereign of this lower world. While vulgar opinion groveling in error, looketh upon you but as a man ; we intuitively know you to be of celestial origin. Wherefore let all honours be paid to the son of Jove."

The high priest, with all his attendants, (what cannot churchmen do for their interest !) prostrated themselves before him, and regaled his nostrils with clouds of the same frankincense which they were wont to burn on the altars of his reputed father.

The deify'd monarch with all the affected majesty of an immortal, bid them rise ; for he then no longer doubted 'his being the son of Jupiter, from a fond conceit that the high priest of the temple could have never
known

known the thunderer's intrigue with his mother Olympias, in the shape of a serpent, but by some heavenly revelation; considering at what a vast distance the temple was situated from Greece, and the little, or rather no commerce between the two places.

But upon the young conqueror's first inroad into Persia, the high priest of this temple had dispatched prying emissaries towards his army to pry among, and learn from them the history of Alexander's life; that he might make use of the most flattering circumstances thereof to pay his court to the vain monarch, should he chance to advance with his victorious army so far.

By a true piece of priestcraft, it was contrived that on Alexander's entering the temple, a large prepared
C. 3 serpent

serpent should glide across it, attended with flashes of artificial lightening ; upon which the priest declared, that from said appearance he collected how agreeable it would prove to Jupiter, that Alexander should dedicate a serpent-like form to him in that church, and that no other figure, he believed, would be so agreeable to the fire of gods and men, as that which had been carried over Alexander's head during the procession, by way of canopy.

This was attacking Alexander's vanity in the weakest point. He ordered Clytus, Hephestion, Craterus, and some others of the favourite chieftains of his army, to carry and make a votive deposite of it, in their master's name, on the grand altar of the temple.

The

The serpent being placed thereon, and proper adoration (according to the high priest's directions, paid to it) a loud voice from within the hollow of the altar, supposed to be that of the divinity, but in fact of a mere mortal tutored for that purpose, was heard to say :

“ Rise all from your approved and accepted adoration to the serpentine figure of imperial Jove, who acknowledgeth Alexander to be his son by the fair Olympias. Before his conquering arms the confederated nations of the earth shall flee, and be scattered as chaff before the wind.

“ All succeeding ages shall resound his glory, and latest posterity shall read his wonderful exploits with admiration. The greatest compliment

C 4

that

that can be paid to any future hero, will be to declare him the Alexander of his day.

“ For the entire completion of our favourite son’s present unexampled expedition, the eagle of victory shall fly over his troops, and the attendant thunder of my protection defeat and annihilate all opposers to his glorious progress.

“ His queen, the beautiful Statira daughter of vanquished Darius, to whom all honours on earth be paid, shall have the precedency in heaven (when translated thither) to all other goddesses, save only our queen and sister Juno, whose constant companion she shall be appointed.”

If Alexander’s pride was become excessive through these well managed adula-

adulations, Statira likewise could not conceal the joy that glowed in her heart, and which added a new lustre to her beauty.

In order to make the priests happy in their turn, for the artificial happiness they had bestowed by conferring a well-timed deification on Alexander and Statira; it was ordered by the royal pair of celestials, that considerable presents in gold and silver should be made to them, which, from their profound veneration for heavenly gifts, they did not make the least obstacle to receive.

After this visit to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, and his being acknowledged the son of that tremendous deity, the young hero planned his next expedition against the city of Susa; of which he soon made himself

master, and found therein the following treasures.

Forty thousand talents in gold and silver specie, with an amazing quantity of other articles of inestimable value ; to wit, the richest of moveables, &c. From thence he marched to Persepolis, the capital of Persia, where having indulged his vanity of sitting on the throne of Xerxes ; he amused himself in receiving such homage from his subjects and others, as is paid to the immortal gods.

Whether from having been fatigued with Statira's charms ; or that he did not chuse that she should undergo the fatigues, the ulterior premeditated progress of his arms, as well as the uncertain events of war, might expose her to, is not known ; he left her behind him at Susa. She was, however,

ever attended there, by a sufficient number of satraps and guards, to pay her all honours due to a princess of her high birth ; and who had joined to that, the honour of being Alexander's queen, the acknowledged son of Jupiter.

The Macedonian hero, in order to celebrate his arrival in the metropolis of Xerxes, who formerly so harrassed Greece, had it proclaimed through his army, that a general day of rejoicing should be observed. He invited all his courtiers and officers to a luxurious entertainment, at which it was declared, that no restraint whatsoever should be observed, but a full sweep given to voluptuousness, in all the forms it could be varied to.

Several

Several Grecian courtezans, complete mistresses in the art of pleasing, and favourites to the chieftains of Alexander's army were bid to attend, decked out in all the attire of allure-ment, in order to prove themselves the distinguished priestesses of Venus.

All that a spirit of debauchery could suggest, and the most exquisite artistry execute, was lavished on their persons, before they exhibited them in the joyous assembly; each of the belles tacitly desiring to attract the liking of the monarch.

After some bumpers of the choicest wine of Greece had been handed about, the awful respect in Alexander's presence began to subside, and joy to rise in every face. Timotheus, the celebrated musician, gave
signal

signal that his prepared concert of instrumental and vocal music might begin ; by which he successively excited all the passions in the royal bosom.

Thais, the most bewitching of the female guests, observing that the king had given quite a loose to joy, thought it a proper season to display her charms before the conqueror of Persia ; in hopes that she might triumph in her turn.

She moved with a varied and graceful elegance to Ionic numbers, now quick, now slow, still addressing all the dumb eloquence of eyes, and wishful looks, heightened by a dimpled smile of fondness to the Macedonian hero ; who began to sympathize with the dancing nymph, and return looks of kindness to her.

The

The dance finished, Thais kneeling presented a paper to the king. He instantly raised her, and therein read these extraordinary contents : “ Dread sovereign of this world, and acknowledged son of thundering Jove, deign to look with indulgence on the humblest of your devoted handmaids; whose sole ambition to be dedicated to your pleasureable will, has made me address the oracle, to know my future destiny.”

The answer from the sacred tripod was, that “ I should be of good cheer, for that by irrevocable fate it was fixed, I should be honoured with the embraces of the greatest being in mortal mould, the next a-kin to Jupiter, and that in a very singular manner.

Alex-

Alexander's vanity was not a little flattered, to find that even his amorous amusements were the special care of destiny ; to complete whose decree he retired with her to an alcove she had previously prepared for that purpose, in case her charms should win the monarch to her embraces.

Some females posted not far off, sang in most melodious notes, accompanied by softly breathing instruments, the most gently soothing and lasciviously melting songs. To the varied modulations, during the deified mortal's compressing Thais, she practised her harlot movements in the truest time.

The congress over, Thais finding that she had so far melted down Alexander to her purpose, as to be able to lead him to any extravagance she pleased,

pleased; she feigned that she felt something like celestial fire within her, which proved beyond all doubt her having been impregnated; and that her happy womb was fraught with a grandchild of Olympian Jove.

Upon this cunning intimation the fervile tribe of courtiers, who proposed thro' her to make interest with their sovereign, prostrated themselves in order to pay homage to the new conception. Alexander's vanity had quite intoxicated and fitted him for the perpetrating any glaring mischief, which the meretricious part of the sex is never backward to propose.

Thais hinted to the warm young monarch, that their amour should be made remarkable to posterity by some extraordinary event. She proposed its being celebrated like that of Jupiter with

with Semelé, in thunder and lightning.

Alexander's pride was too far heated by passion and wine not to be pleased with the proposal; and more so, when she covered her wicked caprice with a shew of national vengeance: saying, let us set fire to Pesrepolis, in return for the Persians having formerly burnt a part of Greece.

Orders were instantly issued, that all the instruments of war might clamour out, as near as possible, an imitation of the thunder's rumbling; while the king, leading the way with a flambeau in his hand, in which article he was imitated by all his courtiers, barbarously set fire to that most ancient city. The most wanton in provoking the conflagration was the wicked Thais, on whom Alexander leaned, while

who rule mankind, to approve of any act that honour cries against : O fortitude ! O Macedon ! O Philip, thou wouldst not.'

"What would he not?" interrupted the king ; "and what means thy daring insolence, to thus presume on our indulgence?"

Clytus intrepidly rejoined, "All my insolence would mean, is, that Philip, your great father, would scorn to do what any Barbarians could—to set fire to a defenceless city ! He never would debase his glory so far, as to let a dancing girl, a harlot, have the direction of his actions."

Alexander's rage, provoked by being thus called the son of Philip, thus placed beneath him ; and seeing streams of
tears

tears flow from the fair eyes of Thais, stung with what Clytus had justly said of her: he snatched a javelin from the hands of one of the attendant guards, with which he ran violently at, and drove it through the body of Clytus, who fell dead at his feet.

Scared at this disaster the company broke up, and the courtiers retired different ways. Thais, during the night kept her royal love in the best humour she could. But in the morning, when reason and sobriety returned, he rose from her with a sense of loathing, as being the cause of his rashly murdering the man he so much loved; and to whom he was under as great obligations as a sovereign can be to a subject.

For some days he would admit none of the courtiers into his presence, thro' resent-

repentment of their not having hindered his committing so inglorious a deed. He banished Statira for ever from his presence, and pronounced death to whomsoever should dare mention her to him. His grief for the loss of Clytus was so excessive, that it was apprehended his health might be impaired in consequence.

But the true antidote to the slowly-consuming poison of sorrow, is bustle and business, as Alexander on this occasion experienced. The Scythians having sent a deputation to invite him to accept their sovereignty, without any effusion of blood; his pride was awakened to appear to them in a light that should manifest the son of Jove and not of sorrow.

In order that a friendship might be more strongly cemented between him
and

and them, he dressed in their manner, and ordered all his courtiers so to do. He afterwards married their reigning princess Roxana, of a temper as proud and violent as his own. She likewise pretended to derive her origin from the great deity which the Scythians adored. This coincided admirably with the vanity of Alexander, and on that account he adhered to her more, than through any violence of affection; for permanently he loved none but Statira.

Returning from his expedition to India, he sickened at Babylon, whither Statira hastened to give new marks of her fondness and duty to him, having been so long in a state of separation. Thither likewise did Roxana haste.

But

But the malady of the victorious monarch they were both enamoured of, proving superior to the skill of physic, he expired in the three and thirtieth year of his age. A few days before his death, Roxana resolving to have no rival, in case he should recover, had Statira assassinated by some of her Scythian slaves.

After the decease of Alexander, she chose for her second husband Perdiccas, a favourite of the departed monarch's, and whom he meant as his successor. But as there is nothing remarkable transmitted in history relative to their love or gallantry, here we break off from them.

THE

The AMOURS of
CLEOPATRA,

WITH

JULIUS CÆSAR and MARC
ANTONY.

THIS celebrated heroine of Egypt, acknowledged universally to have been the greatest proficient in the coquettish arts, that hath as yet appeared in female form, was the daughter of Ptolomeus Auletes king of Egypt ; who at his death bequeathed the crown of that kingdom to the princess Cleopatra, and her brother Ptolomeus Dionysius : whom she

she was to marry according to the usage of that country.

But three ambitious grandees of the Egyptian court, who, after their monarch's decease, had usurped a very great sway, intending to share among them the revenues and power annexed to the throne, got into their hands the young prince Ptolomeus Dionysius, to give a sanction through him to their iniquitous doings.

The names of those three ambitious men were Achilles, Theodotus and Pothinus. It was by their instigation that the young prince sent auxiliary forces to Pompey, in the civil war between him and Cæsar. Pompey in return, by his great interest at Rome, prevailed to have the throne of Egypt given solely to the brother, by a de-

D

cree

cree of the senate, which was very injurious to the sister's right, who had committed no offence against them.

Cleopatra was not a little enraged at finding herself thus deprived of the inheritance left to her by the late king her father. But not long after, she had the satisfaction to hear of her illustrious robber, Pompey's death; which happened in the following perfidious manner.

After the unsuccessful battle of Pharsalia, defeated Pompey fled for an asylum to Cleopatra's brother Ptolemeus Dionysius, in order to be sheltered from the pursuits of victorious Cæsar. But alas! unhappy man, how mistaken was he to have any reliance on the three perfidious traitors, who
betrayed

betrayed their country and Cleopatra's right, to him ; for, by the contrivance of that infernal Trio, he was murdered, as he landed on the Egyptian shore.

By this deed, as base, as treacherous, they meant to pay their court to the rising sun, victorious Cæsar. This, among a thousand other instances in history, is a sufficient cause for the detestation traitors are to be held in. The wretch who betrays one cause for sordid interest, will, for the same vile motive be false to another.

Cleopatra, as it was natural, considering the great injury she had suffered, rejoiced at the death of Pompey, by whose sway in the Roman senate, her exclusion from the throne of Egypt had been obtained. And what heightened her satisfaction, was,

that Pompey's assassination had been not only plotted, but carried into execution by these three objects of her detestation, Achilles, Pothinus, and Theodotus, who made that unhappy Roman act so flagrantly partial against Cleopatra.

The natural pride of that princess's temper, could not but render this signal revenge a very savoury dish to her. When in some time after the murder of his rival for power, Cæsar came to Alexandria, the princess Cleopatra, and her sister Arsinoë, were in Syria, raising forces, in order to make some efforts to recover her right to the throne of Egypt.

But on the first advice she had received of Cæsar's arrival in Egypt, she resolved to repair thither, and plead her cause in person to the conqueror.

For

For abounding with that self-complaifance, of which indeed the fex is feldom devoid, ſhe concluded, that the bewitching graces, and commanding beauty of her perſon, muſt prove infinitely more cogent in her behalf, than all the arguments the moſt powerful orator could advance.

She was not deceived in her hopes ; for though Cæſar had honoured with an audience her humble emiſſaries to him, yet he determined nothing before he ſaw her ; which interview being liable to many difficulties on her ſide, ſhe brought it about in a ſhrewd manner.

Her ſiſter Arſinoe, and her younger brother, met no obſtacle to their entering Alexandria. But Achillas, the reigning brother's general, being apprehenſive leſt ſhe ſhould claim her

right, of which she had been deprived by the intrigues of that general and his accomplices, employed every device to prevent her being seen by Cæsar.

Cleopatra, who had never proved short of invention at any exigence, applied to a person she could rely upon. Apollodorus the Sicilian, to get a small boat, and conduct her on the river, in the dusk of the evening, to a landing place near the palace ; in which vehicle, being by the aid of a faithful woman bound up in bedding, Apollodorus carried her thus concealed on his back through the castle gates, and got unexamined into the apartment where Cæsar was lodged.

The great Julius was highly pleased with the cunning of the stratagem,
and

and charmed with the air, sprightliness, and majesty with which she agreeably surprized him, starting from her enclosure. He gazed, he wondered, and soon became enamoured of her.

In return for Cleopatra's corresponding fondness to the conqueror, he soon ordered the crown of Egypt to be restored to her, excluding her brother, as a just punishment for having so long usurped her undoubted right.

But in some time after, in order to appease the disquietudes and murmuring of the Alexandrians, set on in all probability by the discontented Achilles, and the rest of his turbulent faction, Cæsar found it expedient to place her younger brother in part-

D 4 nership

nership with her on the throne of Egypt.

But the restless Achilles, seeing all his ambitious views threaetned by this measure, applied to, and prevailed upon his royal tool, the dethroned Ptolemeus Dionysius, to protest against the arbitrary and unjust proceeding of Cæsar, which he seconded, by raising commotions and taking up arms against the Romans.

After several engagements, Julius at last, in a decisive battle, gained so complete a victory over Ptolomeus Dionysius, that he was under a necessity of saving himself by flight, and in a precipitate attempt to reach his ships on the river Nilus, was therein drowned.

After

After so decisive a blow in Cleopatra's favour, the Roman conqueror Julius, her passionate lover, joined in the sovereign dignity with her, her younger brother, but eleven years old ; in fact a cypher, but in order to quiet the tumultuous minds of the Alexandrians. By this means Cleopatra was in a manner solely invested with the regal power.

The Egyptian queen detained Cæsar near her, about a twelvemonth, in the utmost profusion of voluptuous luxury ; which, by daily varying, she knew how to give a new zest to. For never was invention so fertile as hers, to give a new whet to pleasure, or to re-kindle almost exhausted desires. New scenes, new devices were daily employed, as for instance :

D 5

Some-

Sometimes they met, he in the character of Endymion, she in that of Venus. Young Cupids pointed to an inviting bower, where, while they indulged the raptures of love, soft instruments according with tender voices were heard ; and from above, by an artful contrivance, a shower of sweet-scented flowers fell upon them.

The most whimsical of all Cleopatra's amorous devices with Julius Cæsar, was, that he and she should be exposed in a golden net of wonderful workmanship, suspended from the top of a falon most magnificently decorated, in the character of Mars and Venus.

On different degrees of a richly ornamented amphitheatre, around the
blissful

blissful state of suspension, were her gentlewomen and eunuchs ranged, according to the precedence of the different gods and goddeſſes, whom they represented. The most deformed and limping figure of her household, was chosen to represent the jealous uneasy part of the blacksmith-cuck-old, Vulcan. While the fictitious pair affected alarms at the discovery; all the mimic deities exhibited in their countenances the peculiar sensations it was proper they should be actuated with.

A necessary war obliged Cæsar to depart from Cleopatra at the end of the year. This cruel separation sat heavy on her mind; as she had looked on the conquest of her charms over Cæsar's affections, an object to be preserved at any rate; she made overtures of accompanying him.

His

His answer was, that with the greatest pleasure he would consent to her taking such a step, which would still continue his happiness, but that the Roman troops had violently declared against her coming with them.

Not long after Julius's departure, his beauteous mistress was delivered of a son, the fruit of their amours, whom she caused to be named Cæsarion, in honour of, and with the permission of Cæsar.

Julius on his return to Rome, had Cleopatra's image fixed near that of the goddess of beauty, in a temple which he had built and dedicated to Venus. The Egyptian queen, as soon as she had heard of this signal honour done her by her lover, entreated him
to

to permit her visiting him at Rome, which request he granted.

She took her young brother along with her. When arrived in Rome, she was lodged by Cæsar in an apartment of his own palace. So open and unguarded was he in his gallantries to her, and so entirely absorpt was he in the intoxication of voluptuousness, that the Romans were highly displeased thereat; such conduct being too disrespectful of Calphurnia the wife of Cæsar, and revered by all Rome for her virtues and good qualities.

But so absolute a power had Cleopatra's bewitching beauty over the affections of Julius, that all remonstrances to him against her, proved ineffectual, and no less a motive than the necessity of his presence to put
an

an end to the war, then raging in the kingdom of Spain, could have forced him from the embraces of the queen.

At his setting out from Rome, he advised her to return to Egypt; for that her sojourning in Rome, during his absence, would be not only improper, but also expose her to the resentment of his wife Calphurnia's jealousy, and to the combined anger of all her friends, who were very numerous in Rome; and that therefore her staying in that city might be attended with fatal consequences, which he entreated her to prevent by retiring to Egypt betimes.

She felt the weight of his advice, and prepared for her return to Egypt, he having previously made her a number of magnificent presents. As Cleopatra, in her most intoxicating scenes
of

of debaucheries, never lost sight of her interest, to which she made all her pleasures subservient, her policy suggested the scheme of leaving the partner of the Egyptian throne, her brother, behind her.

By this expedient she resolved to rid herself of an apprehension she had laboured under, that in case of Cæsar's death, by sickness or the many accidents to which a military life exposes heroes ; that her brother, as he should advance in years, would insist not only upon his share of the government, but attempt to stretch it.

In order to prevent any such disagreeable consequence, she contrived to have him poisoned at Rome, by the most unperceptible method, well knowing that his catastrophe would be
better

better concealed where he was a stranger, and less enquiry made, than if it were to happen at home, in their own dominions.

On Cleopatra's return to Alexandria, the first news she heard was the barbarous murder of Cæsar in the Roman senate, by the ungrateful Brutus and his associates, in so base so cowardly a manner.

Having shed a few tears at the first emotion she felt on the melancholy news ; her policy whispered her to bethink in time, of siding with that party which appeared most likely to prevail in Rome, and thereby to be able to support herself on the throne of Egypt.

By a transition that cost her no very great violence, she entered into
an

an intimacy with the eldest son of the late Julius Cæsar's greatest enemy. Cæsar being no more, she concluded that the family of Pompey would be of the most sway in Rome : wherefore, she judged it to be her interest to cultivate the friendship of the chief of that illustrious family ; and thereupon (true woman) entered into a connection of fondness with Sextus Pompeius, the heir of him who had formerly, through the instigation of Achillas, deprived her of the right of co-inheritance with her brother Ptolemeus Dionysius, as had been willed by their father.

The political course which Cleopatra steered during the civil war, between the assassins of Julius Cæsar, and the avengers of his murder, was to trim with both parties ; for which purpose,

purpose she sent auxiliary troops at the same time to Cassius, on the side of the assassins, and to Dollabella on the side of the avengers.

But in consequence of the decisive battle fought at Philippi, Marc Antony and Augustus Cæsar were in fact the masters of the Roman empire. The third personage of the triumvirate, Lepidus, was but a mere cypher, of whom neither of the other two could harbour any jealousy, but alternately meant him a convenient tool for their politics to work with.

Marc Antony, upon his arrival in Cilicia, dispatched Dellius to Cleopatra, with a mandate from him, to appear in person before his tribunal, and answer to the impeachment lodged against her, for having assisted Julius Cæsar's enemies.

Dellius

Dellius had no sooner delivered the commission to Cleopatra, with which he was charged by Marc Antony, than she conceived flattering hopes of succeeding with him, as she had with Cæsar and Pompey before. She had moreover learned, during her residence at Rome, the characters of all the great men there, who were like one day to rise to great power. Among other particulars, she had learned that Marc Antony was known to be of an amorous disposition.

With an air of interesting solicitude, she put many questions to Dellius, relative to Antony; the burden of each was, that she hoped she had not given him any offence, or cause of anger whatsoever. That although she had never the honour of knowing him personally, she had notwithstanding

ing

been long acquainted with his many great and shining virtues ; nay, more, that he had long a great share in her esteem, on account of the friendship that subsisted between him and Julius Cæsar ; in losing whom, she lost her chief support : and that, to aggravate her misfortune, the wickedness of her enemies was so implacable, as to accuse her of taking part with his murderers.

Here artful sighs, and a studied burst of tears, interrupted her discourse. Nay, she played her part so well, as to clear herself of the charge, in the opinion of Dellius, or indeed, of any man who had eyes to see such beauty in affliction.

Cleopatra having perceived through her tears, that she had interested Dellius in her behalf, she recovered as it
were

were from her fit of sorrow, and put on such a languishing look, as filled him, not only with a generous compassion, but, also extorted from him an instant declaration of his being devoted to her service.

He advised her to dissipate all anxiety, and to grieve no more: that he took upon himself to assure her, that her personal charms would soon disarm whatever resentment Marc Antony could have harboured against her from wrong informations; and who, he imagined, would have much more to fear from the power of her beauty, than she from any effect of his anger.

She gave readily into the opinion of Dellius, from the power her charms had already experienced over Pompey and Cæsar. She did not hesitate
a mo-

a moment to swell the list of her admirers with the name of Marc Antony, whose conquest she looked upon as a thing of course.

On her dismissing Dellius, she bound him still farther to her interest, by giving considerable presents. She charged him with the kindest messages to his lord, promising a prompt obedience to his commands, as soon as she should be able to get all things in readiness for her departure, and her being in a proper condition to appear before him.

At this interview of congé with Dellius, the artful queen had taken care to set the beauty of her person in a most advantageous light. No article was forgot, that could in the least enhance her charms in the eyes of Dellius;

lius, on whose mind she meant to make a strong impression; that in consequence of the striking account he should give of her superior beauty, Marc Antony should be made impatient to see the bright original, of which so elegant a picture was drawn. She looked languishingly, smiled fondly, and played off all her coquettish arts at the envoy of the Roman triumvir.

After the departure of Dellius, her fertile invention went to work in contriving the variety of pleasurable scenes, with which, succeeding to each other, she should entirely captivate Antony to her wishes, and to her ambitious lust of power; that thro' him she might rule over all, who acknowledged his authority.

In order to excite a strong desire of her coming, she did not make any violent

violent haste to set out on the expedition : for her scheme was to know ere she commenced the journey, what effect the report of Delliuss had on Marc Antony's mind. She therefore delayed setting out, till her immediate appearance was demanded by many repeated messages.

The important day being at last come, on which she intended to try her fate; having made all requisite preparatives, in superb ornaments, money, &c. and embellished her person with all the assistance of her art, she sallied from her palace, attended by her guards.

Soon after she embarked on the river Cydnus, in a small, but neat galley, of most excellent workmanship. The head of it shined with
bur-

burnished gold, with which it was inlaid in a very curious manner.

All the sails were made of purple silk. Nay, the oars with which the galley were rowed, consisted of silver, and kept musical time to the hautboys and flutes that played to them.

Cleopatra, with a studied air of lasciviousness, indolence, and supine affectation, had her self tricked out in such ornamental attire, as the goddess of love was supposed to delight in, when she exhibited herself under a canopy of gold, enriched with the most curious embroidery.

A number of handsome young boys were stationed on each side, like so many Cupids, in order to fan the supposed goddess of beauty, Cleopatra.

E

The

The most beautiful of her attendant ladies of honour, dressed in a mixed habit, partaking of that of the sea nymphs, and of the graces, surrounded her in awful silence, to execute her royal commands, and direct all the subordinate to them.

Those of a less delicate form were stationed part a-round the helm, in order to relieve each other in steering; part at the tackle, which they had been taught to manœuvre. There exhaled from the galley to the shore, filled with multitudes of spectators, a delicious fragrancy which added to the general glee.

Cleopatra's bosom was dilated with an excess of joy, as she saw the prodigious crowds that flocked together from all quarters of the city, to behold

hold so magnificent a sight. She appeared rather to make her triumphal entry, than one summoned to account for her actions.

Deserted Marc Antony was left alone in the forum on his tribunal, all his attendants having gone to feast their eyes on, and pay homage to Cleopatra as their sovereign. How it tickled her ears to hear the people on either bank of the river, as her galley moved along, say to each other, "Venus is come to feast with Bacchus, for the general welfare of the Asiatic nations."

We apprehend that it will be an additional entertainment to our readers, to present them here with the poetical descriptions of this parade of Cleopatra's on the river Cydnus, as drawn by the two greatest poetic geniuses this

kingdom has produced, to wit, Shakespear and Dryden.

It will also be a pleasure to observe the different points of light, in which those great men have considered it, and on what parts of the historical detail they have chosen to bestow their heightening strokes, and enliven with the strongest glow of colouring.

There is a greater strength, and a more energetic conciseness in the picture drawn by Shakespear. In that of Dryden, there is a milder, freer, and more elegant display of all the different parts that constitute the whole, which are perhaps too closely crowded together in Shakespear. He indeed presents his piece with an off-hand, and unstudied magnificence; which Dryden being sensible of, strives
to

to rival him, with a beautiful arrangement of several figures, and an unequalled harmony of expression.

Thus runs Shakespear's picturesque description.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne
Burnt on the water.—The poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars
were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat, to follow faster
As amorous of their strokes.—For her own person
It beggar'd all description; she did lie
In her pavillion, cloth of gold, of tissue,
O'er-picturing that Venus, where we see
The fancy out-work nature.—On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did.

O rare for Antony !

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereids, or
 So many mermaids, tended her i'th' eyes,
 And made their bends adornings.--- At the helm
 A seeming mermaid steers. The filken tackles
 Swell with the touches of those flow'r soft hands,
 That yarely frame the office. From the barge
 A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
 Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
 Her people out upon her ; and Antony,
 Enthroned i'th' market place, did sit alone,
 Whistling to the air ; which but for vacancy,
 Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
 And made a gap in nature ! rare Egyptian !

Thus flows Dryden's terse, florid
 and happy versification.

Her gally down the river Cydnus row'd,
 The tackling filk, the streamers wav'd with gold ;
 The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails,
 Her nymphs like Nereids round her couch were
 plac'd ;

Where she, another sea-born Venus, lay.

She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,
 And cast a look so languishingly sweet,

As if, secure of all beholders hearts,
 Neglecting she could take 'em : boys like Cupids
 Stood fanning, with their painted wings, the
 winds

That play'd about her face. But if she smil'd,
 A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad ;
 That men's desiring eyes were never wearied, -
 But hung upon the object. To soft flutes
 The silver oars kept time, and while they play'd,
 The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight
 And both to thought. 'Twas heav'n, or some-
 what more !

For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds
 Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath
 To give their welcome voice.

It is apparent from reading the two pieces, one after the other, as they have been wrote, that Dryden was thoroughly sensible of the difficulty he laboured under, in being obliged to give Cleopatra's progress on the Cydnus in a poetical dress ; it having been already executed in so strong a manner,

by that foremost of dramatic writers, Shakespear.

Dryden, in order to compensate in some sort for the expressive vigour, infused into the description of England's proto-type for sublime diction, called into his assistance all the succour of tasteful and ingenious art, and has left it a disputed point among the connoisseurs of polite writing, which of the two pieces is the more masterly performance.

As soon as the queen landed, Marc Antony sent her a most courteous invitation to honour him with her company at supper. To the person who brought the invitation, after pausing a while, she made this answer, " That although his master, as a Roman senator, and then acknowledged the greatest

est man in the world, might insist upon all potentates waiting on him ; yet she humbly hoped that he would remit a little of his supreme and unquestionable authority, in behalf of a stranger, and a woman ; and that as the brave have been always celebrated for their indulgence to the wishes of the fair sex, she humbly requested he would spare her pride, as a queen, and that she might be first favoured with a visit from him."

Marc Antony's impatience to have a sight of Cleopatra, made him readily grant her request. On her side, she took all possible care, and as much as the shortness of the time would permit, to prepare an elegant reception for this great warrior, whom she meant to subdue by her artful wiles.

She

She planned all the batteries of her cunning, to beat down the hero's mind, and hoped that by luxurious entertainments, and amorous dalliance, she should reduce him to her purpose. At his approach, soft music calculated to excite the passions, were played off. In an avenue of high trees, a surprising quantity of branches with lights in them, were disposed in the cleverest manner, some in squares, and some in circles: they were all let down at the signal of his being come.

A great number of birds that she had trained, were let loose among the branches, and sung to the splendor of this artificial light, as if the sun were rising. As he advanced along, he saw ranged on each side of him
in

in two rows, a suite of most beautiful women, dressed in a most sumptuous manner, and every step he made, he observed that they rose in beauty, and magnificence of attire. His eyes were ravished with so enchanting a variety.

By thus arranging the ladies of her court, Cleopatra's scheme was to give Marc Antony an idea of the gradation of beauty from the lowest degree to the highest imaginable. So convinced was that beauteous queen of Egypt of the superiority of her own charms, that she had never felt the least jealous sensation, on account of any other woman's beauty.

For that reason it was, that she had constantly about her person, the most celebrated belles she could collect, that they might serve as so many
foils

foils to her, affording to all who might approach her, the easy means of making comparisons so agreeable to her vanity, and which always concluded her fairest among the fair.

Cleopatra had fixed herself in a thoughtful attitude, her graceful head reclined upon her alabaster hand. She had so well contrived the studied position she was in, that Marc Antony might see her, whilst he knew not that he was mutually seen by her.

From the first moment that it could be imagined she saw him, her subtle majesty sprung up with such an air of alertness, to meet, and welcome her illustrious guest, that her foot slipped as it were by accident, and she dropped on her knees.

Marc

Marc Antony ran up to raise her. As soon as she was recovered from her affected fright, caused by so unexpected a disaster, she returned her thanks to Marc Antony for that favour, in the choicest language, and in most winning accents. She concluded her complimentary address to him in a very artful manner, hoping that this accident at their first interview, was auspicious, it seeming to intimate that he would support her female weakness by his strength, and take under his protection a queen, who resigned herself and interest to him.

This little artifice of Cleopatra's, however trifling in appearance, produced the desired effect on Marc Antony's mind, quite smitten with her. She was too intelligent not to read
 imme-

immediately her triumph in his eyes. she tacitly applauded her successful stratagem.

Her fall, that seemed the effect of a respectful hurry to receive Marc Antony, moved his compassion ; and the ready-witted turn she gave to it, raised his admiration. The whole transaction conspired to remind him of the mighty power, and extensive authority with which he stood invested.

He supported her by the arm, and led her to a chair of state, which she had prepared for him to sit on. He placed her in it with some affected reluctance on her side. His kind attention to her, was the pride of her heart, which she had art enough to conceal.

He

He sat near her ; as he attempted to speak, his voice faltered. His words came from him in a flurried and trembling manner, which denoted how much he adored, and at the same time how awe-struck he was by her beauty.

All the strong symptoms of love that broke out on Antony's side, made Cleopatra's heart swim in an ocean of joy. She omitted no allurements, no heightening artifice, to encrease his love for her.

He invited her to sup with him the next night, during which repast, she rivetted her charms so fast on him, that he was never after capable of extricating himself. He told her, in a most submissive manner, that whilst he served under Gabinus in Egypt, he
had

had heard various reports of her transcendent beauty, and that although at that time he suspected them to be exaggerated, he declared them all to have fallen infinitely short of the bright original, of which they impotently attempted to give an adequate picture.

She thanked him for his too favourable opinion of her, in the most flattering terms, and manifested such an extraordinary and well-acted fondness for him, as must have imposed on most men. But all the while this consummate coquette had no other regard for this hero, who lived but in her smiles, than as she beheld in him the fit tool for her ambition, and the sure means of extending her power.

Cleopatra's policy being convinced that Marc Antony's friends must be her

her enemies, and that they not being fascinated by love, as their master was, would soon see into her deceitful conduct, and discover the self-interested drift of all her actions ; she therefore made it her study to put them and her lover at variance.

Her next step was, to place all her own creatures, on whom she had an entire reliance, near the person of Antony, debarring all others from having any admission to him ; by which monopoly, she met no opposition in the many projects she had to propose to him.

The first trial of importance that she put his love to, was, the prevailing on him to consent to the death of her sister Arsinoe. To this princess, younger than Cleopatra, the deceased
Julius

Julius Cæsar had formerly allotted the kingdom of Cyprus. Cleopatra had no particular cause of complaint against this young princess, but was invidiously piqued at her universal good character, and wanted besides to deprive her of her kingdom.

To bring her hellish project to bear, she so contrived matters, that for a week together her lover found her frequently in tears. When asked the cause, she told him it was from an information she had received, that her treacherous sister Arsinoe was plotting against her life, jealous of her good fortune, to be the object of his fondness.

This hint was enough for so blind and passionate a lover as Antony, who, without entering into any farther enquiry

quiry about the matter, gave private orders for dispatching Arfinoe, and so remove the cause of Cleopatra's grief. He made her a present of the kingdom of Cyprus, which soon put an end to her affected sorrow for Arfinoe's death.

The next act of her great power over Antony was, her persuading him to go with her to Alexandria, contrary to the advice of his friends, his interest, and all the cogent reasons of policy. She resolved to detain him in that city, at all events; and for that purpose put in practice all the diversions and sports she could imagine, that his time being so entirely taken up with diversity of amusements, business should find no opportunity of intruding.

She

She instituted an order called *The inimitable Life*, and the distinguishing title of inimitable lives was given to those who had the happiness of being admitted. The spirit of this institution was, that such a variety of entertainment should be pursued, as to leave no craving void to the mind ; which intent was to keep Antony always occupied, and hinder his relapsing into any reflections from his present inglorious life ; whilst his indefatigable rival for empire was gaining advantages against him in many places.

She knew perfectly well how to adapt herself to all the different humours of her lover, in order to maintain her absolute sway over his affections. She never parted from him ;
was

was always by his side, that whisperers might not have an opportunity of insinuating any thing to him against her.

Rather than be absent a moment from him, she would play at dice, drink, and hunt with him; nay, attend him even in his military exercises: and on such occasions, as if suddenly enraptured with the majesty of his deportment, would fondly cling around, calling him her Hercules, her Alexander, her Hector, her Achilles.

He so entirely yielded himself up to her wanton stratagems, that they would often dress themselves like gods and goddesses of Rome and Egypt. At other times they would ramble about the streets of Alexandria, in disguise, alarming the inhabitants with an unreasonable noise at their doors, and windows, he
dis-

disguised like a servant man, and she like a common woman.

It happened sometimes, that they returned home roughly handled, nay, beat and bruised, from such licentious expeditions, which with her art she used to turn to matter of mirth.

She invited him to an angling match with her, but he being so unlucky as not to catch any thing, apprehended that she would look upon him but as an indifferent sportsman; wherefore, against the next bout, he gave private orders to some fishermen to dive under water, and fasten on his hooks some fishes, that had been just fresh taken.

In consequence of this decree, he drew so fast, that had she not been so much used to impose on others, she
might

might have been deceived. But she was soon aware of the juggle, which in his presence she pretended to be ignorant of, and affected a rapturous amazement at his dexterity in taking fish so fast, which highly pleased his vanity.

Cleopatra having let her friends into the secret of the discovery she had made, invited them to assist at a fishing party the next day. They all attended. Immediately after they were got into their fishing barges, and Antony had thrown out his line, Cleopatra ordered a diver, in her service, to get the start of Antony's, and fasten on his hook a fish, which had been taken in the Pontic sea, and salted.

The gallant Roman, imagining he felt a bite, drew up his line with an air of triumph ; but upon the freight-
age

age of his hook appearing to be a salted fish of the Pontic sea, the company could not forbear laughing at so unexpected a sight.

He was for some time in a rage, at seeing himself so exposed ; but as she knew how to work him up and down as she pleased, she thus addressed him with a smile : “ Great warrior of Rome, do not envy us the humble inhabitants of Canopus and Charos, our reputation of being skilled in the art of fishing. Your proper game, great sir, is the taking cities, provinces and kingdoms. Be not then surprized that poor little fishes are scared from your hook, while armed millions flies from your sword with precipitate fear.”

He was so charmed with this compliment, that he rushed immediately
into

into her arms. While he was warm with love, she led him to a neighbouring bower, there to indulge in all the extravagance of bliss ; during which revelry, as if conscious thereof, all the fish of the lake sprang up, which was executed by the alertness of her divers.

Thus, day after day, did Cleopatra by subtle arts work on Antony in such a manner, that the frequent accounts of the defeats of his party, could not rouse him from the pleasing lethargy in which she kept his senses steeped.

Two alarming messengers at length arrived, one from Rome, bringing news that his brother Lucius Antonius, and Fulvia his wife, had made up their private quarrels, and joined to oppose Octavius Cæsar, who driv-

F

ing

ing all before him, had obliged them to quit Italy. That moreover Octavius, had not only made himself master of Gaul, but had also got over to join his cause, all the remaining forces that were cantoned in that part of the Roman empire.

The second messenger brought a still more disagreeable account, to wit, that the Parthian forces, commanded by Pacorus their king's son, succoured by Barzapharnes and Labienus, had taken possession of Syria, and advanced their conquering arms, as far as Jerusalem. That they had plundered that city, and taken away prisoner with them Herod's brother Phazael, and the high-priest Hyrcanus. That Herod was fled to the mountains of Judæa, in quest of a safe retreat.

The

The alarm these two messengers caused in Antony's breast, prevailing over love and fondness, he got together two hundred ships, and a considerable army, in order to chastise the Parthians for their insolence. At their departing interview his tears streamed abundantly ; she affected to sympathize, tho' her heart was quite unaffected, but as to what regarded her interest.

She had spies devoted to her, who attended Marc Antony, and gave her an exact account of all that passed ; and if Fulvia were like to efface her from his thoughts. She sent him an artful letter, fraught with all the feigned raptures of sincere passion ; to which she had received such an answer as she desired. She could not forbear asking the messenger a thousand questions relating

lating to Antony's behaviour, on receiving and reading her letter ; and she had the additional joy to learn the death of Fulvia, which she thought left a clear coast for her, and that she now might look on herself as possessed of Antony's heart, without a rival.

While she was delighting her imagination with the fancied prospects of her future greatness, a messenger arrived from Marc Antony, with news of a nature terrifying enough to turn all her faculties to stone.

By him she was informed, that thro' the intrigues of Julia, Antony's mother, and L. Coccius Nerva, a peace had been concluded between Antony and Cæsar : that Octavia, sister of the latter, was made the pledge of this peace, by being married to the former.

She

She learned also, that in consequence of this, to her, detested marriage, Antony and Cæsar had entered Rome in triumph, leading between them Octavia ; and that as they advanced thro' the admiring crouds of their fellow-citizens, continued acclamations of joy proved this to be a more pleasing and satisfactory event to the people of Rome, than any that had happened for a long time.

In consequence of a new division which they had made of the Roman empire, all the western provinces, including Gaul, were to be the lot of Octavius. The Eastern were to acknowledge Antony for their master. A town of Illyria, called Codropolis, situate on the confines of Macedon, and eastward of the Adriatic gulph, was to be the limit of their respective dominions.

The insignificant Lepidus was to continue undisturbed in Africa ; and Pompey's narrow sway was to extend but over Sicily, and a few islands contiguous to it.

Cleopatra was to her great mortification informed, that Marc Antony had entered so hastily into this peace, as to have accepted the priesthood of the new sanctuary, lately erected, in honourable remembrance of the assassinated Julius Cæsar, and in the political view of pleasing Octavius his successor.

There is no describing the various agitations of passion the queen of Egypt was hurried through by such dreadful news to her. At one time she feared all was lost : at another, she entertained some distant gleams of hope, which

which were soon swallowed up in the blackest despair, from which she awoke in transient fits of madness.

She soon after learned that Antony was arrived at Athens, accompanied by Octavia. After some stay there, he sailed for Syria, in order to regulate certain affairs; which done, he returned to Athens. In that city he made no long delay, being greatly exasperated by some reports which had been made to him against Octavius.

He sailed directly for Italy with a fleet of one hundred ships, and made for Tarentum; the harbour of Brundisium being refused to him.

Octavia, in order to prevent an irremediable rupture breaking out between her brother and husband, prevailed on the latter, she being then big with child, to let her repair to the for-

mer. She was met on the way to him by her brother Octavius, with whom, in the presence of his two friends, Agrippa and Mecenas, she had a very long conference.

She worked so effectually on the mind of Octavius by her sollicitations and tears, as to prevent a war breaking out between them at that time. Nay, Cæsar, in complaisance to his sister, marched peaceably to Tarentum, and altho' he there had a formidable army drawn up on the shore, and a considerable fleet in the harbour, he did not offer to commit any act of hostility against his brother-in-law Marc Antony.

An amicable interview ensued, the kindest salutations being interchanged on both sides. On this occasion peace was brought about a second time, between Antony and Cæsar, by the intermediation of Octavia.

Tho'

Tho' Cleopatra fretted greatly at this second reconciliation, yet things happened to turn out more agreeably to her wishes than she had any reason to expect. This lucky revolution for her was, in consequence of an agreement between Antony and Cæsar, that the latter should give the former two of his legions to fight under him in the war he was meditating against the Parthians; and that Antony, in return, should make over one hundred of his armed gallies to Octavius.

Farther grants being mutually made, Octavius directed his course immediately against Sextus Pompeius, in order to rescue Sicily from what he called his usurped possession. Antony made sail for Asia, having left his wife in the care of her brother.

The anxious queen of Egypt conceived some cheering hopes from the separation of Antony and Octavia, looking upon that as a favourable opportunity to put her cunning to work for the regaining of his affections, now for some time weaned from her. She contrived to have the following letter put into his hands by one of her faithful agents, who watched the most favourable opportunity of delivering it.

“ To the emperor Marcus Antonius.

“ **E**Xpression would prove bankrupt, should it vainly attempt to paint the many tortures, and racking agonies I have suffered during the absence of the dear conqueror, whom alone I love. Love ! did I say, ah ! rather whom I adore.

“ It

“ It is humbly hoped that you will pardon this my intrusion, to dare write my sufferings to you. Indulge me still farther to lay aside all pomp of title, and call you by the beloved name of Antony.

“ Forgive this freedom (tho’ you be the brother-in-law of Cæsar, and one of the sovereigns of the world) for this tender appellation calls to my fond remembrance all those blissful hours, when we thought time’s rapid wings hurried our pleasures on too fast.

“ But, fool that I am, why should I thus idly strive to picture to my fancy those joys, of which the present privation causeth all my misery, and inexpressible anguish. Every gale of wind that blows towards Athens, I load with sighs and lamentations, intreating their friendly wastage to your ears.

“ What

“ What inconceivable comfort would my harrassed soul receive from a few lines, even of indifference, if written to the disconsolate Cleopatra, by the hand of her dear Antony ! Gods ! how I should kiss them ! how embalm them with my sighs ! how bedew them with tears of fondness !

“ But, alas ! that is a favour I must not hope for : and yet, methinks, some escapes of compassion towards the too afflicted queen, that had been once so happy in his love, could not, even in the mighty Marc Antony, be deemed an unheroic act.

“ Octavius Cæsar might, indeed, be displeased thereat, and imagine himself insulted, thro’ what his pride might look upon as an injurious treatment of his sister. There is the fatal rock on which I but too plainly see that all my hopes are shipwrecked.

“ I

“ I have been informed (pardon my mentioning it, which, I assure you, is with the greatest concern) that in the presence of Octavius Cæsar, tho’ a youth in comparison to you, you seem appalled and daunted, as if conversing with some superior being.

“ Let not then the unhappy Cleopatra, by either your writing to, or seeing her, be the cause of your incurring this great Cæsar’s displeasure; in whose tremendous presence not only the common herd of mankind, but even, my conqueror, Marc Antony, stand in awe.

“ There was a time I fondly thought so, that the hero whom I loved, could fear no frown but that of thundering Jove, or of the declared goddess of his heart.”

That

“ That time is, alas ! no more. I see that Antony ought to keep well with Cæsar. He must never see, or even enter into an epistolary commerce with the forsaken and despairing

CLEOPATRA.”

Nothing was ever better calculated than this letter to gain upon Antony ; for therein, under the masked battery of female fondness, his pride was attacked in the most sensible point ; to wit, the charge of being so mean as to act before the boy Octavius, as an inferior.

Antony, on reading the letter, was frequently heard to say, by the messenger who had delivered it to him : “ Alas ! what undeserved distress must you have suffered, my dearest Cleopatra ! ” This was his expression at the
parts

parts which appealed to his compassion. But in those, where Cæsar's supposed superiority over him was squinted at, he bit his lips in a frantic manner, he swore, he stamped, he raved, he roared.

“ Shall it then be said, ye gods ! that I must be the humble and devoted do-tard of Octavia, lest her brother should chide, rebuke, or punish me ? No, by Rome's sacred capitol, the undeceived world shall see, that the nod of this imperious youth, which slaves may tremble at, shall be to me but a meer subject of mirth.

“ Cleopatra's constancy, tenderness, and love, shall be rewarded. Thither I shall not be compelled by the awe of any higher power ; and thereby let the too presuming Octavia, and her insolent brother, learn the difference.”

Things

Things now ran as Cleopatra wished ; for Marc Antony having got into his head that Octavia wanted to make a thorough husband, a mere domestic drudge of him, through the terror of her brother's name, he began to hold them both in the utmost detestation. His pride could not brook the notion of his being supposed to live in awe of any mortal being.

Cleopatra, made quite happy by the messenger's informing her what various agitations her lover had undergone, in consequence of her letter ; She wrote to him every day 'till he came into Syria : from thence he dispatched Fonteius Capito to Egypt, to conduct his dearly beloved mistress to him, contrary to the advice of all his friends.

The

The queen of Egypt, transported with the joyful message, and the success of her cunning, obeyed the glad summons without any farther delay, than that barely necessary for proper preparatives to appear before her re-claimed lover.

She beguiled the way, by asking her guide Fonteius Capito variety of questions, about the present disposition of Marc Antony. All his answers coinciding with her secret wishes, she looked upon her second triumph over Marc Antony as secure, and employed her thoughts on several stratagems, how she should make the most of this new conquest over the Roman triumvir.

His impatient love could not suffer him to wait at his own palace to receive,

ceive, but hurried him some part of the way to meet her. There is no painting the delight with which his countenance was animated at her appearance.

She artfully threw herself at his feet, in a most suppliant manner, and affected so submissive a countenance, as after so long an absence gave a new zest to his joy of seeing her again.

“How! kneel to me, fair queen, whose bending before their altars is an honour sufficient for the immortal gods. Rather let me kneel before the shrine of so much excellence and beauty. O rise my goddess, and bless those longing arms, that have never known extatic happiness, but when they held encircled your world of charms.”

Cleopatra,

Cleopatra, in a feigned tone of humility, replied to all his rapturous embraces; and tears of gratitude seemed to trickle adown her cheeks. "O my friend, my emperor, my only support in this world; how can my unworthiness be ever able to repay any part of your excessive goodness, to a forlorn and unbefriended queen!"

He hindered her proceeding in such a plaintive strain, with repeated caresses, and in order to dry up her tears, made her several presents of very great value, all which she declared her contempt for, saying that in her eyes were of no value, but as their being gifts of her Antony.

As soon as she had wriggled herself as strongly into his favour, as
ever

ever she had been, and found herself the arbitrary mistress of his affections, her first care was to have all those persons removed, who had advised against his sending for her to Syria; and likewise those whom she had the least room to suspect were in Octavia's interest.

Having by degrees dispersed from Antony's person all those to whom she had the least dislike, and glutted her vengeance on them; she then set about indulging her other favourite passion, to wit, her boundless avarice. To satisfy its violent craving, she framed several false accusations against the governors and noblemen of Syria.

So indefatigable was she become in wickedness, that any unhappy person, whose possessions had charms for her,
was

was immediately accused of treachery, plots, &c. and Antony not only believed each charge, without difficulty, but thought himself happy in having so active and vigilant a friend as Cleopatra, to make such timely discoveries of all the dangerous schemes that might be hatching against him.

It was by her machinations, that Lyfamas king of Calcis was assassinated by the orders of Marc Antony, though he had formerly raised him to the throne of that kingdom. The charge she alledged against him, was, his having taken part with the enemies of her lover; but her only motive for this accusation was, that his spoils might fall to her share.

Cyprus, Cyrene, Iturea, Cælo-Syria, Phœnicia, with a considerable part of Crete, and Cilicia, were by such iniqui-

iniquitous schemes added to her dominions: all which she looked upon but as a prologue, to her future usurpations, considering the absolute ascendancy she had obtained over Antony's mind, who granted almost as fast as she requested.

Antony having made ready all military preparations, for carrying on a war against the Parthians; it was judged proper, by all parties, that Cleopatra should not accompany him in that expedition. At parting from him, she played off all her wonted tricks, to leave a lively impression of her on his mind.

At one time, she plied his vanity by exhibiting the wildest extravagance of passionate sorrow, for her being so eminently wretched as to be doomed to pass one day deprived of his dear
com-

company. Then on a sudden recollection, she thanked her stars, that she was yet so far blessed as to be in his presence, and to be able to feast her eyes on the supreme object of her idolatry.

A burst of sighs, and a torrent of tears gushed out, at the mention of the Parthian war. "O cruel deities!" she exclaimed; why not rather extinguish that barbarous people, than let them be the wicked cause of my insupportable separation from Marc Antony?"

"Tutelary gods of Egypt, who direct the benign swelling of the river Nilus, if ever your zealous votary Cleopatra has been the object of your care; if you have deigned to hear her humble supplications, O grant her present prayer: let the kingdom, the very name of Parthia, and all her monstrous

strous progeny be instantly annihilated, so that I may detain my Antony, and not languish in an insipid life, when far from him.

“ But he shall not go; by all-subduing Venus, by Cupid, her powerful son, he shall not : for when seduced from me, under the pretext of making war against the Parthians, I see what my enemies drive at; it is to lead him indirectly back to hated Italy.

Italy ! execrable name to my fond love, of which I fear it will prove the bane. For there, should Cæsar, the all powerful Octavius, in whose presence all other mortals tremble, chide, censure, or threaten to punish Antony for his return to me ; he then for the sake of his safety, must yield to whatever terms young Cæsar's arrogated
 supe-

superiority of spirit shall deign to grant, and the reconciliation be ratified by my lover's tasteless and domestic drudgery, in Octavia's stale embraces.

Affected deeply by Cleopatra's seeming fondness, and stung to the quick by her artful insinuation of Antony's superiority, he bid her to banish all fear ; to never harbour the least surmises of its being possible for him to alienate his affections from her, whatever revolution of fortune might attend his arms.

Appearing quite satisfied with this sanguine declaration, of the imposed on Triumvir, she let him go, convinced of her having so strongly rivetted his passion, as that it would be impossible for him to live long in absence from her.

G

Her

Her care immediately after the departure of her lover, whose credulity she laughed at, was to consider how she should amuse and divert herself during his absence, or how, by the execution of some well imagined scheme, she might fill up the void of time.

Having for a long time conceived the project of getting Judea into her possession, for which she had not as yet been able entirely to prevail on Marc Antony's consenting thereto, she resolved to go thither and take a view of it. She arrived safe there, having on the way taken a survey of the principal towns of Syria.

She was treated with the greatest respect by Herod, sovereign of that
king-

kingdom, who paid all the honour due to Cleopatra's high rank, as a queen; and particularly to her, as the chief favourite of Marc Antony; to whom the supreme sway of that part of the Roman empire was allotted.

Herod's secret view in paying an extraordinary court to the queen of Egypt, was to make a friend of her with Antony, in case that his (Herod's) mother Alexandria, a woman of a most turbulent and ambitious spirit, should attempt to offer any complaints against him.

Cleopatra who had private views on the kingdom of Judæa, thought that the best method to make Herod give into the snare she wanted, would be to seem to have conceived a passionate fondness for him.

This she knew would be the sure means of destroying Herod in the opinion of Antony, about whom she had placed her trusty spies, who were to make Herod (should he dare to be guilty) appear unsuccessful, at the same time that they were to exaggerate her inviolable constancy to Marc Antony.

This crafty woman very well knew that Herod's head must pay the forfeit of Antony's harbouring the least suspicion of his having cast an eye of concupiscence on Cleopatra ; which catastrophe of the Judæan monarch was what she had determined to effectuate : and after her making him the victim of Antony's enraged jealousy, to receive his kingdom from the Triumvir, as a reward of her fidelity to him.

In

In order to execute this prescious mischief so much to her taste, she called forth all her charms, and in order to succeed in drawing Herod to her lust, employed all the artifice and cunning she was capable of. But the politic king of Judæa proved too subtle to give into her wiles. He did not think it at all prudent to become the rival of one of the rulers of the Roman empire, who could dispose of his life and Judæa, as to him should seem fit.

Herod's political coldness to Cleopatra's advances to excite a passion in him, engendered such a violent hatred in her bosom for him, that the prior conceived desire of doing him mischief, was redoubled by this affront to her beauty, this unpardonable

indifference to the power of her charms.

On her quitting Judæa, full of dudgeon against it's monarch; Herod thought it prudent to wait on her as far as the borders of Egypt; where at parting, he made her several valuable presents, in hopes to assuage her anger thereby, and make her bury in forgetfulness his neglect of her beauty. But woman's rage in general, and especially Cleopatra's, was not to be appeased by presents.

The first news she learned at her return to Alexandria, was that Octavianus Cæsar had made a most successful and glorious campaign, had driven Sextus Pompeius out of Sicily, of which kingdom he had made an entire conquest. That he had compelled

pelled Lepidus to resign the office, as well as abdicate the name and power of a Triumvir, and to be satisfied with a private station. That in consequence, the senators of Rome emulously strove who should flatter and pay the most servile court to Octavius, whose triumphal carr success and victory devoutly followed.

Cleopatra was not displeased at the news of Cæsar having reduced Lepidus to a private station, because by that means the entire power of the Roman empire necessarily devolved on Antony, jointly with himself.

A messenger from Antony arriving much about the same time at Alexandria, informed her that his master's campaign had been as unsuccessful as Cæsar's had been lucky. That not-

G 4 withstanding

withstanding the tremendous number of forces he had along with him, which threw into the greatest consternation all the Indians on the other side of Bactria, and spread an alarm throughout affrighted Asia, yet they failed under him, on account of his amorous impatience to return and spend the winter with his idol Cleopatra, of whom he never ceased speaking. To close this inglorious campaign discomfited Marc Antony, after having been harassed and having failed in all operations, made one of the most contemptible retreats the records of history have transmitted down to posterity.

He lost an army ; thirty thousand of his best troops in this fruitless expedition fled from his foe, and were retired in safety at Leucocomé, between Berytas and Sidon, where he
 • desired

desired Cleopatra should meet him with all possible speed; that he waited for her arrival with the utmost impatience, and should not know any return of happiness, 'till blessed with her wished for presence.

Before she could be ready to set out from Alexandria, another messenger to her arrived there from Antony, imploring her to use all manner of dispatch, to see his lord; who, he said was almost become frantic, through his impatience to see her: that in order to beguile the irksome hours of her (to him, killing) absence, he gave into all sorts of debauchery in wine.

The messenger farther added, that he could not sit out his meals quietly, but would every now and then start up, to see if his Cleopatra were coming, and thus address the elements: " Blow

favourable ye winds; and gently flowing waves hither waft the invaluable treasure of Cleopatra's charms."

The relation of Marc Antony's impatience filled her with the greatest pleasure; and to excite his desire still more, she industriously protracted her delay, it being the favourite triumph of her soul, over the infatuated Triumvir, to see such a number of messengers crowding on the heels of each other, to press her departure.

This unaccountable phrenzy of his lasted till the arrival of the fair absentee, who was the cause of it. She had not enjoyed her ascendancy over Antony many days, when the disagreeable news was brought to her, of Octavia's having got out from Rome, with her brother's consent, to join her husband; to whom, by her, Cæsar had sent very considerable presents.

The

The artful queen of Egypt dreading the Roman lady's power, contrived that she should receive letters on the way, from her husband Antony, importing that it was his pleasure she should wait at Athens for him, alledging for his reason in making her that request, the very perplexing war in which he was then engaged, and that must necessarily debar him the pleasure of seeing her for some time.

The prudent and sensible Octavia knew very well from what quarter those prohibiting orders had proceeded. She sent to her unkind husband in return letters fraught with the sincerest tenderness and most profound respect.

In order to prevent the bubbled Antony from any scheme that might lead him near Athens, which would probably be productive of an interview with Octavia, a just object of
ter-

terror to Cleopatra's politicks, she affected to be wasting away, through her violence of love, for the dear ungrateful man, as she called him.

For which purpose, by fasting and every other method she could think on, she wrought herself down to be so thin, pale, and wan, as seemingly to have not long to live. But as often as Antony, alarmed by her seemingly perilous situation, came into her apartment, she would affect an air of sudden joy, as if revived from the dead, and look on him with a kind of rapturous fondness; intimating that she could live but in his presence, and that were he upon any pretext to leave her for ever so short a time, her death would be the immediate consequence.

This well acted farce, producing the desired effect in Antony, threw him
him

him often into such convulsive uneasiness, as to render him unable to conceal what he suffered, by such a dreadful suggestion. As soon as the poor credulous fool, who had been taking great pains to comfort her, by repeated assurances, was gone from her, she would burst into a fit of laughter, turning to ridicule the agonies he felt, for her pretended sufferings.

She had acquired the art of commanding tears at a moment's warning, which on his approach she would affect to wipe away in a hurry, that he might not be affected by them. Sometimes even the very tears, which excessive mirth had extorted from her, she would persuade her gulled Antony, were the sincere effect of unexampled love for him.

Having

Having by these tricks succeeded to make Marc Antony believe the least absence of his would cause her death, he for that time gave over all thoughts of the Parthian war, and let himself be conducted back in triumph by her, to Alexandria; while neglected Octavia remained in vain for his repairing to her at Athens: and all who wished well to the Roman glory, cried out shame, at his infamous conduct and abandoned supineness.

Antony being entirely at Cleopatra's disposal in Alexandria, she worked his passions so up and down, and made the name of Cæsar, as well as of his sister Octavia so odious to his ears, that she at last completed the full drift of her design, which was to make him write a letter to his wife,
couched

couched pretty near in the following terms.

Marc Antony, to Octavia.

Since it is impossible for us now, and is like to be so for some, to meet, considering the present perplexed situation of our affairs in this part of the world; we have thought proper to notify to you, that it is our present will and pleasure, that you forthwith repair to Rome, and remain in that city, 'till it may be expedient for us to see you there, or in some other appointed place, for which you shall receive our orders

Marc Antony.

The true wife, the submissive Octavia, that paid always a due deference to the commands of her husband,
who

who by such a series of unworthy actions proved himself quite undeserving of so excellent a woman. This new insult to the injured Octavia, was another triumph to Cleopatra, who in her wicked heart despised the easy fool, that so implicitly obeyed all her capricious commands.

The next project Cleopatra's restless ambition turned to, was to excite a civil war between her lover and Octavius, and in which should the latter be defeated, she conceived hopes from her great influence over Antony, of making his weakness get himself to be divorced from Octavia, in order to declare her the mistress of Rome, and empress of the universe.

Marc Antony having by perfidy made himself master of Armenia, and got prisoners king Artabazes, his
queen,

queen, the young prince and princesses his children, with many other personages of exalted rank, he ordered them to be conducted before him, according to the custom practised in the triumphs at Rome.

There was indeed this essential difference; that the triumphal processions of Rome terminated at the temple of Jupiter in the capitol; whereas in Alexandria, the place of that powerful deity was usurped by Cleopatra, seated in publick on a throne of gold, that had been erected on a scaffold overlaid with silver, gazing multitudes crowding on every side.

The unhappy monarch Artabazes, and the other prisoners, being presented in chains to Cleopatra, her vanity expected that they should have
kneeled

kneeled and prostrated themselves before her. Nay, her attendant flatterers had the insolence to advise the unhappy captives for their own sakes, to pay such servile adoration; but they were too nobly minded to act so slavish to the royal harlot of Egypt.

However this laudable refusal of theirs, cost them dear.

Marc Antony gave, not long after this triumph, a feast to the inhabitants of Alexandria, for which intent he had them assembled in the place of public exercise; where, he being seated on one throne of gold, and Cleopatra on another, he declared her son by Julius Cæsar, the young Cæſarian, to be sovereign of Egypt and Cyprus, in conjunction with his mother.

To

To the three children he himself had by her, the following departments were made ; Parthia, Armenia, and Media, and the rest of the Eastern countries, when they should be subdued, were provisionally given to his son Alexander ; to whose twin sister Cleopatra, were assigned Lybia and Cyrene.

On his youngest son Philadelphus, were bestowed Syria, Cilicia, Phenicia, and all the provinces of the lesser Asia, from the Euphrates to the Hellespont ; on each of whom Agamemnon's title, king of kings, Rex Regum, was conferred.

Antony having assumed to himself the name of Osiris, gave that of Isis to his favourite the Egyptian queen.

Osiris

Osirus was the great god of Egypt,
and Isis the great goddess.

From that time forward, they had both the abandoned impudence to appear very often, before the eyes of a too patient public, to see such wanton wretches attired in the dresses these deities seemed fond of.

The intoxicated Antony in a very idle oration, in order to flatter Cleopatra's vanity, exaggerated her merit with all the glare of false eloquence he was master of; insinuating at the same time, that she had been married to Julius Cæsar, and that consequently he was his lawful heir.

Cleopatra judged it expedient to keep Marc Antony always immersed in pleasure, lest being at any time
left

left to himself for calm reflection, he might rouse up from the lethargy in which he was buried, and shake off the too fatal chains to his glory, with which he had suffered himself to be tamely manacled.

Therefore her fertile invention constantly amused him with variety of entertainments, and daily change of revelling, ever on the tip toe of attention to have in readiness whatever he might chance to have a desire for, thus she kept him ever gratified, and in good humour.

Marc Antony prepared one evening a very expensive supper, to entertain his darling Cleopatra. She observed to him with a turn of jocularitv peculiar to herself, that however costly he might think the supper
which

which he had prepared, yet it was but poor, put in comparison with what she could exhibit on her side. Nay, she positively declared that she would provide a supper, in which the share that each should consume would amount to more than the value of six millions of sesterces. Antony looked somewhat sour at her undervaluing his feast, and the mighty boasts of what she could do. He was so far irritated, as to lay her a wager that it was impossible to make good her declaration.

Cleopatra desired nothing more than this bet. The night being appointed for her expensive supper, she had one prepared, in which Antony perceiving that there was no very costly article, burst into a fit of laughter, and with a sneer of triumph, de-
fired

fired that the bill of fare might be served by the hostess, that she might be paid her expence.

After some dalliance, and having worked up Antony to the point of good humour, in which she desired to see him, she took one of the pearls out of her ears, equivalent to the above-mentioned sum, dissolved it in vinegar, and drank it off. She was about taking the other out for its undergoing the same operation, that Antony might great her in as rich a draught ; but her hand was held, and the other pearl saved by Lucius Blancus, who declared that Marc Antony had already lost his wager.

The astonished Triumvir remained for some time in a kind of amazement, at the extravagance of her device, from which she awoke him by
this

this protestation accompanied with a joyous smile : “ Although these pearls have been transmitted to me, from a long race of royal ancestry, yet would I sacrifice them, nay, the world, and all therein contained, to procure a moment’s entertainment to the dear lord of my wishes.”

This artful declaration, uttered in a most spirited manner, added to his already excessive love for her, she was soon compensated for her pearl, by a profusion of presents, which was her real motive for dissolving it, knowing full well, that her fond dupe would not be behind in repaying her.

They soon intended for Ephesus, where Marc Antony had issued orders for his fleet to rendezvous. This formidable armament, consisted of eight hundred vessels, including the
tenders ;

tenders ; of which number Cleopatra had furnished two hundred, besides provision for the whole army during the war, and cash to the amount of twenty thousand talents.

The sincerest friends of Antony's glory strenuously advised him to send Cleopatra back to Alexandria ; there to wait the event of the war between him and Octavius. This advice she got wind of, and took all manner of pains to counteract ; lest by any treaty put on foot, during her absence, Octavia might come again into play, and be restored to her long alienated husband's favour.

She interested Canidius in her behalf with bribes, that he might plead her cause to Marc Antony, and remonstrate to him how unjust a proceeding it would appear, that she should

H

be

be debarred her share of any glory that might arise from an expedition, towards whose necessary expences she had so largely contributed.

She contrived to conceal herself while she overheard all the arguments Canidius urged, and entered the room just as he had concluded his harangue in her behalf. Finding Antony softened to her hand, she played off most dexterously all her harlot tricks, and prevailed on the amorous triumvir to let her accompany him.

She sailed with him to Samos. There all the princes, sovereigns, as well as the representatives of common wealths and cities, in Marc Antony's interest, were to bring all the necessary provision, and auxiliary troops they were to furnish.

Soon

Soon after Marc Antony's arrival in that island, Cleopatra perceived him to be unusually pensive and gloomy. She therefore contrived to have a proclamation issued, encouraging all who delighted or excelled in sportive entertainments, to repair forthwith to Samos ; by which means that island for some time wanted in all sorts of revelry ; the comedians and dancers, alternately exhibiting their performances in the theatre to crowded assemblies. The queen of Egypt was the actuating spirit that kept all in movement.

The several crowned heads then attendant on Marc Antony, endeavoured with a slavish emulation to out vie

each other in the magnificence of their presents, and pompousness of their feasts; which gave room to this just remark of the sensible observers on all that passed.

“ In what manner will this luxurious and intoxicated people celebrate a triumph, should they prove so fortunate as to obtain a victory; since at the bare commencement of a war, they can be so profusely lavish, and guilty of such expensive merriment.”

Notwithstanding, these diversions, however brilliant, and however varied, did not absolutely cure the Triumvir of his deep-rooted melancholy, which preyed upon him to such a degree, that he became apprehensive of being poisoned by every person that approached him.

Nay,

Nay, Cleopatra's self (while this gloomy temper prevailed) did not escape the general suspicion, which she contrived to defeat by this ingenious stratagem. For having observed that he would neither eat nor drink without tasters, she dipped in poison the top of a garland that she had wore on her head, and as they waxed warm with wine, she proposed drinking, their garlands thrown in, after the bowl of wine had been tasted.

So extraordinary a proposal did not in the least surprize Marc Antony, who had been used to many more capricious ones from her. They both on the instant threw their garlands into the bowl. But as the triumvir was going to drink, Cleopatra snatched the bowl out of his hand, telling him what she had done.

“ Is it then against Cleopatra,”
 (quoth she) “ my dearest Antony,
 that you guard yourself, by this newly
 put in practice caution of tasting?
 do you think, most unkind of men,
 that if it had been either my interest
 or inclination to live without you; that,
 opportunity has been wanted to per-
 petrate the horrid deed you live in
 shameful apprehension of ?”

Having made this insinuating re-
 buke, she ordered one of her slaves
 to drink off the bowl. He died im-
 mediately after. Antony for some time
 remained motionless, and quite asto-
 nished at seeing the wretch expire
 before him.

She fell artfully into a most seem-
 ingly passionate fit of crying, for hav-
 ing been suspected, which made the
 triumvir

triumvir ask her pardon, and play several unmanly tricks, proceeding to the most childish condescensions, which a woman that truly loved would never suffer him to do.

They steered their next course from Samos to Athens, where being actuated by jealousy at the very recital of the honours which Octavia had received in that city, she resolved to rival her in the esteem of its inhabitants, by treating them on every occasion with all manner of studied civilities.

Cleopatra being so accomplished a mistress in the art of pleasing, that whenever she intended to appear in an amiable light, she seldom or rather indeed never failed of succeeding: she soon insinuated herself so far into the good will of the Athenians,

nians, that they deputed several citizens to attend her at her house, decreeing public honours to her.

To give a new dignity to the deputation, Marc Antony marched at the head of it as their speaker; he being a free citizen of Athens. Much about this time, she contrived to make him execute a will, in which all his former gifts to her were confirmed, and Cæsarion declared anew to be the dictator's legitimate heir. It was therein ordered, that though he should die in the city of Rome, his corpse should be conveyed through the market-place, and dispatched immediately to Alexandria, to be there interred by his Cleopatra.

This glaring instance of Antony's folly, this crazy will, was lodged in the hands of the vestal virgins. But
by

by the industry of Minucius Plancus jointly with his nephew Titius, they two had been the signing witnesses, the contents thereof were through a just and patriot indignation revealed to Octavius Cæsar, who found means to have the original conveyed from the possession of the vestal virgins into his own hands.

He read it in the Roman senate, laying a particular stress on those passages which he judged the most likely to irritate them. A dependant of Cæsar's, one Calvisius, prepared by him for the purpose, charged Marc Antony with many other crimes, such as making a prostitute gift of the Pergamean library, enriched with two thousand distinct volumes, to the lascivious Cleopatra.

He further alledged against Antony, his having risen from the table at a solemn feast, to make her a barefaced assignation ; and for having suffered the Ephesians to pay her homage, by the title of queen.

He likewise accused him, for having at several public audiences to potentates, &c. received amorous billet-dous from Cleopatra, written in curious tablets of crystal or onyx, and then reading them aloud, instead of attending to the more important business of the state.

It was urged also against him, that when Turnius, a personage of great authority amongst the Romans, and a famous orator, was pleading, Cleopatra had not only the impudence to pass carelessly by to divert from him the attention of the people, but
at

at the same time Antony, regardless of all decorum, as if dragged after that wanton woman by some power of enchantment, rose up, and went off in the middle of the pleading, to wait upon her home.

Another severe charge laid against him, was his having assigned to her a guard of Romans, bearing the name of Cleopatra on their targets; that in all the visits he made to the towns and cities of Egypt, she sat as it were enthroned in a splendid and magnificent car, whilst humble Antony servilely followed on foot, scarce distinguished from her train of eunuchs. O scandal to the name of Rome, and military glory!

The heaviest charge of all brought against him, was the oath he had countenanced for some time, to wit :

“ By

“ By Cleopatra’s undoubted right, to command one day in the capitol.”

To sum up all, there were not the least ridiculous actions of which Antony in his fond excesses had been guilty, through the bewitching instigation of Cleopatra, but what were minutely detailed, and rather exaggerated than softened to the senate.

Geminus was dispatched to Antony by his friends at Rome, to acquaint him with the state of affairs there, and recommend to him more circumspection in his future conduct; for that otherwise he would certainly expose himself to the danger of being divested of the office of consul; nay, of his government’s being taken away from him, and what was still worse, of being proclaimed an enemy to the Roman state.

But

But Cleopatra looking on Gemini^{us} as a spy of Octavia's, took such care that he should have no private interview with Antony, to inform him of the great danger he was in, so that the friendly messenger without having been able to effect any thing with the fascinated and undone Antony, returned to Rome, where most of his friends, in consequence began to give him over, and despair of any recovery, he appearing to them a man devoted to ruin.

A war soon broke out in consequence between Octavius Cæsar and Marc Antony. But so great was the former's policy, that the queen of Egypt's name only, and not that of Antony, was mentioned, and for the by-reason, that in his sense Antony was divested of his government.

Both

Both parties being ready to commit hostilities, there appeared two hundred gallies well equipped, twelve thousand horse, and eighty thousand foot, on the side of Octavius Cæsar.

On that of Marc Antony there were no less in number than five hundred gallies equally well appointed, each of them having eight or ten ranks of oars, so very superb that they seemed to be designed for triumph and shew.

Moreover his forces by land consisted of twelve thousand cavalry, and one hundred thousand infantry. He was attended to that war by eleven kings. About this time the battle of Actium, so celebrated in story was near at hand.

The

The advice of Marc Antony's friends to him was to rely entirely on his land-forces, which were superior to Cæsar's, and to consider besides how badly his navy was supplied. Several captains of his vessels were impressing men wherever they could, and of the most infamous conditions.

Notwithstanding this great disadvantage, Cleopatra was resolved that Marc Antony should try his fortune by sea, because the Egyptian vessels made a great part of the fleet.

Soon after a sea-engagement ensued. But in the midst of the action, Agrippa, entrusted by Cæsar with the command of his left squadron, by the extending of his left wing, meant to hem in Marc Antony's.

Which

Which Publicola, who, in conjunction with Marc Antony, commanded his left wing, having observed, they found themselves under a necessity of taking up more room to defeat the intent of the enemy.

By this movement of Publicola's, the main body was left exposed, and very much dispirited thereat, Arruntius attacking it very strenuously at the same time.

The perfidious Cleopatra, perceiving that success inclined rather against, than for Marc Antony, bethought her of paying court before-hand to Octavius Cæsar, by betraying her too indulgent lover's cause.

She therefore crowded all the sails she could, ran athwart those that
were

were engaged, threw Antony's fleet into a general disorder, by means of its opening to receive hers. This eminent piece of disservice being done; to Peloponnesus did the traitress steer her course.

Disconcerted Antony having in company with him but Scellius and Alexander of Syria, got on board of a galley with five ranks of oars, and impatiently pursued his fair destroyer, so devoted was he to her, and ripe for destruction.

As soon as the unfortunate Antony had got on board Cleopatra's galley, into which she could not refuse receiving him with any decency, (tho' at heart it was entirely disagreeable to her) he neither desired to see, nor speak to her.

He

He seated himself in a melancholy posture at the stern of the galley, his head reclining on his hand ; and until they arrived at Tenarus, which was the space of three days, did he continue in this gloomy mood.

There she attempted not a sincere but a temporary reconciliation, 'till such times as she could be safely rid of him. She employed the most expert among her women to excite the defeated Triumvir's compassion, by painting to him in the strongest colours the violent affliction she was under, for the fatal error she had committed in that ill-judged flight, which ought to be solely imputed to the natural timidity of her sex.

Then they represented how much her beauty was heightened by her present

sent distress, and that their mistress regretted not the loss of any thing in this world, but his cruelly separating himself from her : that if he would condescend to make her happy with his presence, no earthly loss should then give her the least concern.

These faithful emissaries, and worthy agents of their employer, acquitted themselves so well of their commission, that in a little time they not only brought about a reconciliation between the complaining parties, but on the very extraordinary terms, that the injured Antony should ask pardon of the guilty Cleopatra, for her having betrayed his cause.

This woman's slave, this enervated Triumvir, whose history can scarce be read with patience, appeared before his angry dear, with the suppliant

pliant and deprecatory countenance of an offender, while the queen of Egypt's unparalleled impudence deigned as it were to admit him to her presence, with all the assumed airs of offended majesty; that, through excessive love, was wrought upon to pardon a criminal, of whom she had so much reason to complain.

Many of Antony's ships, and a great number of his friends, who had escaped after the general defeat, joined him at Ténarus. The spirited relation they made to him of the obstinate bravery his fleet shewed in the action, as well as of the inviolable fidelity of his soldiers, who proved deaf to all the offers made them by Cæsar's ambassadors, till such time as they found themselves abandoned by all their officers, renewed his grief,
and

and replunged him into his former melancholy.

Grief having taken entire possession of the soul of Antony, he was attended but by two friends in whom he could confide. The deceitful Cleopatra retired to Egypt; all her thoughts were taken up with considering on means to be never more troubled with her ruined lover's presence; that she might in consequence with the more ease and freedom to herself, pay court to the successful Octavius: for success, and not any particular man, had ever been the object of her esteem.

Antony's desperate situation was farther aggravated, on hearing that the person who commanded for him in Lybia, was gone over to Octavius with all the forces of that country. He was so affected by this unexpected

desertion of the Lybian governor, that he resolved to put a period to his unhappy life. But the interposition of one of his faithful friends prevented his perpetrating so rash a deed. He then repaired to Egypt, the cause of all his misfortunes, where he expected to find a kind asylum.

The subtle Cleopatra, though not very unwilling to force away the defeated and fugitive Antony, yet not judging the time for his entire destruction as yet come, and not knowing how Cæsar might approve such a step, did not proceed to the last extremity against him.

The resolution that seemed the most prudent to her in so trying a dilemma, was by flying from Egypt to debar Antony the desired happiness of seeing her ; the only thing that could
afford

afford him comfort in his insuperable difficulties, into which his credulity had been plunged by her perfidy and wickedness.

She attempted to carry into execution a most extravagant project in the manner hereto annexed. There was a small neck of land between the Egyptian and the Red Sea, that divides Africa from Asia, and is not much above thirty miles across in the narrowest part.

Her scheme was to have hawled over this neck of land a score of gallies, and navigate therein with all her treasure on the Red Sea, 'till fortune should throw her on some remote country, where she might live free from slavery, and have a chance, by putting in force her so often successful artifices, to betray more warriors and potentates.

potentates. For of so wicked a disposition was she, that to do mischief was dearer to her, than her possessions.

But the Arabians of Petra having burnt the first gallies that were carried over, she abandoned so impracticable an undertaking, and issued immediate orders that the several avenues of her kingdom, should be fortified with all possible speed.

During these transactions, the fallen and disconsolate Triumvir returned again to Alexandria. His sufferings were the least object of Cleopatra's concern, whose thoughts were entirely taken up with hopes of ingratiating herself with Cæsar, and being effectually delivered of the ruined Antony's hated presence.

Her

Her cold treatment of, and behaviour to him, so added to his affliction, that he determined to seek an asylum elsewhere; which her ungrateful cruelty opposed. The only accessible refuge then left to him, was to retreat to the sea-side, and build a house in the isle of Pharos, which he did, and called it his Timonium; thereby insinuating that his meaning was to copy Timon of Athens in railing against mankind: having been, like him, betrayed by those on whom he thought he might have the strongest reliance.

Had Cleopatra been sure of gaining Cæsar's favour by her mal-treating Antony, she would have left him

I

to

to rave his heart out in that solitude, nor ever think of administering the least comfort to his affliction. But she had received undoubted information, that she was not to expect the least kind usage from Octavius, who was filled with indignation against her, as the cause of all the dishonourable treatment his injured sister Octavia had received from her deluded husband.

The subtle queen, to make a virtue of necessity, and close her life with the appearances, though in fact without the least real sentiment of gratitude, sent messenger to Antony, entreating him in her name to return to Alexandria, which he complied with.

In order to divert all reflection from him, she revived their former banquetting and revelry, and substituted to the order of the Inimitable Livers, another, which she named, the expirers together, and that for splendor and luxury was not inferior to the former.

The foolish Antony's phrenzy was so soothed by this delusion of the queen's, as to make him vainly believe that thereby she emblematically declared she would rather die with him, than live with any other mortal.

Cleopatra being resolved to prepare against the worst events, had

I 2 various

various sorts of poisonous drugs collected for her use, that by trying experiments with them on criminals condemned to death, she might know which was the least painful in its operation.

She looked on the unhappy wretches while they were in the most violent agonies with a calm composure, and quite unmoved, as at beholding any common trifling occurrence. From her having observed that sharp pains and frequent convulsions were caused by quick poisons, and that those of a milder nature took up a longer time to produce their effect, she ordered all sorts of venomous creatures to be examined, and applications of them
to

to be made to different persons for her own inspection.

She was convinced, after a very strict examination, that the asp was preferable to them all, for its bite, which, without exciting any apparent convulsion, caused in the head a very great heaviness, and a propensity to sleep in consequence; during which sleepiness the face was bedewed with a gentle sweat, and such a general numbness ensued, that they departed life as if immersed in a lethargy.

She issued her orders at the same time for building, (contiguous to the temple of Isis) several monuments and tombs of a stupendous heighth, which

have been since objects of admiration, for their amazing as well as curious workmanship.

She had all her treasure of silver, gold, pearls, emeralds, &c. carried thither with a great number of torches, a considerable quantity of flax, and combustibles of every kind; being determined on a discovery of no hopes of any favour, to snatch herself suddenly from the reach of the victor's power.

Octavius's avarice was alarmed at this proceeding of the queen of Egypt, lest in a fit of despair she should commit so valuable a treasure to the flames, and thereby deprive him of
a tri-

a triumph he so ardently wished for.

But in order to make Cleopatra forego her desperate resolution, Octavius sent daily messengers, who were to insinuate that she might expect great indulgence from him; but her justly-founded suspicion of being led in triumph, of which Octavia and Livia were to be spectatresses, made her remain suspended, and defer the ruin of Antony.

At all events, in behalf of herself and children, she petitioned for the kingdom of Egypt, and that Antony might live in the kingdom as a private man; and at the same time sent

as a present a golden chair, sceptre, and crown, to Octavius.

He disdained to return any answer relative to the fate of Antony; but sent promises to Cleopatra, that from him she might expect every favour he could reasonably grant: if she would either have Marc Antony murdered, or driven out of her kingdom.

Although this proposal of Octavius to Cleopatra against the unhappy man, who had sacrificed his all for her, did not in the least shock her delicacy; yet by bribing the messenger, she found she had no great room to form any reliance on Cæsar, to whom she would readily sacrifice Marc Antony,

tony, were there any hopes of making him sensible of her charms.

However, she from time to time would sooth her chafed fancy with the hopes of making Augustus, a new slave of her charms and cunning. But to such flattering thoughts as often succeeded a heavy gloom, from the dreadful apprehension of being carried a captive to Rome, and doomed to follow the car of Octavius in a triumph through the streets, a victim of Octavia's resentment, and the scorn of an incensed people, for all the mischief she had been the occasion of.

While she continued to impose on Antony, (by celebrating their birthdays, and indulging in other extravagant follies,) in order to ingratiate herself with Octavius, from whom she

had received some intimation of his being capable of a passion, she gave Pelusium to him, having sent private orders for that purpose to the governor. As soon as Cæsar was in possession of Pelusium, the city of Alexandria was the great object against which he made all his forces march.

In this critical situation Marc Antony and Cleopatra acted very opposite parts. For while he laboured to animate the citizens of Alexandria to take up arms, and march out against the approaching forces of Octavius, she gave private orders to the contrary.

Antony, however, on Cæsar's first arrival made a vigorous sally, in which he put to the rout the cavalry of his antagonist, driving them back to
their

their trenches. He returned to the palace in his armour with an air of triumph, and congratulated with Cleopatra on the fortunate event of that day's battle.

This perfidious woman, who received and embraced him with all seeming demonstrations of joy, sent immediate intelligence by a faithful messenger to Octavius, that through her persuasion Antony should attack him the next day by sea and land ; but that she had so managed affairs, as that he (Octavius) might rely that both Antony's fleet and cavalry would go over to him.

Octavius treated with the greatest scorn a challenge sent to him by Antony to fight in single combat ; adding,

I 5

that

that since he (Antony) was justly tired of his infamous life; he might find several other ways of putting an end to it. Cleopatra took care to aggravate the affront, and fire him with so raging a resentment as to make him determine on giving Octavius battle by sea and land the next day.

Cleopatra passed the intervening night in the greatest agitations; at one time hoping that through Caesar's affections she might be mistress of the world; dreading at another time, in case he should deceive her hopes, the ignominy of chains, and being made the principal pageant of a triumphal procession.

That

That thought stung her to the quick—but starting up from her bed, she cried aloud : “ At the worst, one refuge still remains, death ! to whose fatal scythe the conquerors and conquered fall an equal prey. If I shall have room to suspect fallacy from Octavius, why then my settled resolution is, to expire with Antony ; and as I have lived, to die under false colours : and triumph in the semblance of being constant to his love.”

At the dawn of day Antony marched out of the city gates with the infantry, which he posted on an eminence. The first interesting object he saw was the fleet of his side bearing

ing directly down upon the enemy's. He looked earnestly upon, to see what might be the event of that movement.

But soon, to his great astonishment, he beheld the two fleets, instead of commencing acts of hostility, approach and mutually salute each other, and having joined, make directly for Alexandria.

To add to his grief for this desertion of the fleet, on turning about, he saw his cavalry going from him to Octavius. His infantry being soon after beat, he retreated with them within the walls of Alexandria, exclaiming aloud as he went along: " Your queen,

queen, for whose cause I was fighting, has betrayed me."

She, dreading the consequence of those exclamations, as well as Antony's outrageous fury at her having so basely ruined him, through a feigned pretext of her fearing to fall into the hands of Octavius, fled to the monument which she ordered to be made as fast as possible, and gave positive orders that no person whatsoever should have admittance, without being previously furnished with her special permission.

She ordered her emissaries to rumour abroad that she was dead. About that time Dollabella, one of
the

the late Julius Cæsar's favourites, and who had been smitten with Cleopatra's charms, bid her not feed her fancy with vain hopes, -but to fear the worst from Octavius Cæsar.

Alarmed by this news, and of two evils resolved to chuse the least, she dispatched a messenger to Antony to inform him of her being still alive, and that the only happiness this world could yet afford her, would be to see him at her monument.

The message reached Antony too late, for upon the first report he had heard of Cleopatra's death, he commanded a faithful follower of his, called Eros, (who was bound in promise

mise to kill him whenever danger should appear inevitable, by putting an immediate end to his misery,) to fulfil the said promise.

But the faithful Eros, unable to execute so dreadful a command, shunned the necessity of killing his master by murdering himself. At sight of which Antony ran upon his own sword, and dropt upon a couch.

His wound, although mortal, not causing immediate death, he ordered himself to be carried to the monument, where the disconsolate queen enjoyed in tenderest expressions their last interview. Her sorrow was violent, not on account of the bleeding object that lay before her, but for her disappointed

disappointed ambition, which however Antony (imposed on to the last) interpreted to be grief for the situation in which she then beheld him.

The expiring Triumvir, instead of breaking out into any violent rebukes, did all in his power to sooth her tormented spirit. He affected a chearful countenance, suppressed his sighs, and called for some wine, entreating her rather to recall to mind their past happiness, than to idly lament their present adversity.

She soon saw through Cæsar's drift, by the frequent flattering messages and the political visit he had paid her in person, in order that by his fallacious promises she might be reconciled

ciled to life, and he thereby have the better opportunity, of getting her, and her immense treasure, into his possession.

Her request, which he readily granted, was, that she might be permitted to inter Marc Antony. On that solemn occasion she acted all the mockery of woe, to cheat the world at her exit ; by hoping that it should believe her to have died the victim of her constant love to him. But had Octavius proved kind and coming to her wishes, Antony, for her, might have lain a prey to the ravenous fowls of the air.

The scene of her acted lamentation being over, she adorned Antony's monument

monument with garlands in a most elegant manner, often kissing and dewing it with her tears. Her attendants were then ordered to prepare a bath for her. After she had bathed she sat down to supper, and indulged in a luxurious manner.

A person dressed like a peasant deceived her guards, through the pretext of bringing her some figs, under whose leaves he brought a concealed asp to her. She wrote a letter to Octavius, imploring that he would order her to be interred in the same tomb with Antony. Having given the letter into the hands of a faithful messenger, she applied the asp, and soon after expired, not a victim of true love, as she would fain have
it

it imagined, but of ambition and perfidy.

For in her life-time she had often declared, that if all the estimable qualifications, scattered among mankind, were centered in one, they could have no charms for her, but as far as their possessor could be instrumental to her ambition; and that at any time she would betray beauty and excellence to turpitude and deformity, so she could thereby add to her aggrandisement.

F I N I S.

is inspired, but of ambition and
pride.

For in the lifetime she had often
observed that it all the estimable pas-
sions, it acted among mankind,
yet seemed in our laws to have
no share. But as far as their
operation could be influential to her
satisfaction, and that at any time she
would have beauty and excellence
in the world, and the way to the
great, it was to her agreeable.

U.C. 3. 1. 1. 1.



